



NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C.

APRIL 1994

A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

VOL.12
NO.8

**Kids Are Back
And They've
Got Money**

see page 10

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GENESIS
NOT FOR RESALE

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Our Students' First Teachers

To help students succeed in school—to help students really learn—we need to involve parents in their children's education. Schools are understanding this basic reality more today than ever before.

I see the signs of this understanding everywhere. Parent resource centers. Adult literacy classes. Workshops on parenting. Computer lending libraries. Voice mail systems offering information on courses, homework, and school events.

The specific programs vary. The aim is the same: creating school environments that make parents feel truly welcome. These school-based programs are wonderful new additions to American public education, but they're not enough—because they stop at the schoolhouse door.

We need to go further. We need to recognize another all-important basic reality: When it comes to acquiring the attitudes and behaviors so fundamental to school success, there's simply no place like home.

Home is where children can best develop the attributes so crucial to learning—confidence, motivation, effort,

responsibility, initiative, perseverance, caring, teamwork, common sense, and problem solving.

Dorothy Rich, a veteran educator who's worked with parents for over 20 years, calls these traits "MegaSkills"—the inner engines of learning.

As educators, we can't waltz into homes and "teach" children these skills. But what we can do is reach out to parents with practical activities that families can use at home and in the community to foster the MegaSkills of their children.

Today, all across the nation, NEA members are doing just that. Thousands of your NEA colleagues—from Trenton, New Jersey to Oakland, California—have completed the two-day MegaSkills® Leader Training Program for Parent Involvement, and they are now conducting workshops for parents eager to help their children learn.

Parents leave these workshops with new insights about how their children learn—and handouts about learning



NEA President
Keith Geiger

activities their families can do at home or around town. The activities are innovative and fun, learning "recipes" for the kitchen and the living room, the supermarket and the gas station.

Our year-old NEA Center for the Revitalization of Urban Education is currently sponsoring MegaSkills training for NEA members who work in some of the nation's poorest inner-city schools. The programs—by

actively linking teachers and other school staffers with parents—are creating a new excitement about learning.

NEA members like Nestor Gonzalez, an art teacher at Calvin Simmons Junior High School in Oakland, are constantly reinforcing in their classrooms the same lessons that MegaSkills helps parents introduce at home.

Gonzalez's students each select a MegaSkill to visualize, then do drawings, clay figures, even papier-mache' gargoyles based on their visualization.

"We get into conversations about work—about how to work, how to initi-

ate a project, how to persevere, how to complete it," says Gonzalez. "I go back to these MegaSkills all the time."

Children who arrive at school with confidence about themselves or an eagerness to solve problems are children poised to move forward in the classroom. As educators, we know how basic these basics are. Most parents do, too.

But parents don't always know how to teach these basic concepts. That's why programs like MegaSkills are so important to our nation's future.

Parents, after all, are their children's first and most enduring teachers. Schools can—and do—spend enormous amounts of staff time and dollars trying to compensate for what's missing in children's homes. This effort is important. But schools, we must remember, can never become surrogate homes.

"We can't renew our country until we realize that governments don't raise children, parents do," President Clinton said earlier this year. "Parents who know their children's teachers and turn off the television and help with the homework and teach their kids right from wrong—those kinds of parents can make all the difference. I know. I had one."

For more information about MegaSkills®, contact the Home and School Institute, 1500 Massachusetts Ave., N. W., Washington, DC 20005.

4 Flirting or Hurting?

When you were in school, it was called teasing, flirting, or just bad taste. Today, when it's unwelcome

and interferes with a student's opportunity for an equal education, it's called peer sexual harassment—and it's against the law.



15 Innovation

Frederick, Maryland students from kindergarten to college are part of a grand experiment that culminates

this month with a rocket launch. It's part of a cross-discipline curriculum project first proposed by eight teachers last summer.



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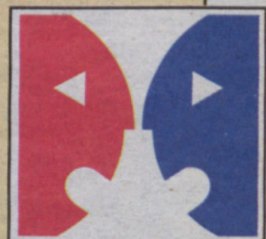
A New Hampshire educator discusses his role as a prankster, columnist, big brother—and custodian. Is he effective?

Three years ago seniors at the high school where he works chose him and his partner to be their commencement speakers.



35 Should States Mandate Reform?

Yes, says a California teacher: With progressive state leadership, mandates can help assure equity and excellence. No, says a Maine teacher: We're just beginning to win decision-making power. Why give it up?



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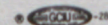
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NATIONAL NEWS

The Right Runs Amok

Kills Proposal To Enhance Teaching

A bad thing happened to a good bill that could have helped thousands of teachers. Credit goes to zealots on the right.

It seemed such a simple thing. For weeks, the House of Representatives had debated H.R. 6, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

ESEA is the key legislation covering most existing federal elementary and secondary education programs. These include Chapter 1 for disadvantaged children, Impact Aid for children who attend schools near military installations, and other key programs. It authorizes roughly \$10 billion per year; the reauthorization itself fills 900 pages.

By February, members of the House Education and Labor Committee were fine-tuning the measure, "marking up" as it's known in Washington parlance.

During the debate, California Rep. George Miller proposed a nine-line amendment. To get federal professional development money, he said, states should have to make sure teachers are certified in the subjects they're assigned to teach.

His goal: to stop the practice of assigning public school teachers to teach subjects out of their area of certification.



"The issue has since been manipulated and inflamed for ideological and political purposes having nothing to do with education policy or the home schooling issue."

—Rep. George Miller
D-California

"H.R. 6 threatens federal control of private, religious and home schools."

Gary Bauer, former undersecretary of education in the Reagan Administration, commenting on the Miller amendment.

Miller had spoken to numerous teachers about this issue. Many told him they'd been forced to teach out of their areas

because of budget cutbacks or other reasons.

Seems simple enough. But that's not the way the Home School Legal Defense Fund and other like-minded groups interpreted the measure.

They saw the Miller amendment as an attempt to force those who teach their children at home to be certified teachers. And they called out the troops. Their leader: the Home School Legal Defense Association, headed by defeated Virginia lieutenant governor candidate and former Moral

Majority leader Michael Farris.

In the first of many mailings about the issue, Farris wrote, "Urgent Alert! Congress attempts to impose teacher certification requirement on home schools and private schools."

In a single day, thousands of calls flooded into Capitol Hill. Tennessee Rep. James Quillen told the Associated Press, "I've never seen anything like it."

Miller's office staff reported their phone lines were so jammed, they had to use voice-mail recordings to answer the overflow calls for five days. The volume of calls was heavier than for any other recent issue, they said, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, health care, and the Brady Bill.

From faxes and phones, other right-wing groups took to the airwaves, getting talk show hosts Rush Limbaugh, Gordon Liddy, and Pat Robertson to lambaste the Miller amendment.

Rep. Bill Ford of Michigan, who chairs the House Education and Labor Committee, tried to straighten things out. He told reporters the Miller provision had always been meant to cover

public schools, not home schools.

"Somebody put two and two together," says Ford, "and got 10."

Ford's explanation made no difference. The right-wing groups pushing the controversy weren't about to be derailed by the facts.

"They saw an opportunity to make an organizing issue out of the Miller proposal," explains NEA Government Relations Manager Michael Edwards, "even though there was never anything there that would affect home school teachers."

And they carried the day. Miller's proposed amendment was abandoned, and a good piece of legislation was lost.

Congressman Ford called the action to kill the Miller amendment in H.R. 6 "an unnecessary solution to a non-existing problem."

Congressman Miller told his colleagues after his amendment was withdrawn, "What went on here had nothing to do with the language in this bill. It has to do with some other agenda of organizations that decided they were going to steam up a lot of parents."

"The result," Miller continued, "is that children will continue to be taught by teachers who don't have the ability or the qualifications to teach those children. That is a tragic end to this story."

What does this development mean for future legislation?

The defeat of Miller's amendment "probably killed any possibility of any

meaningful legislation in the area of national certification and licensure," says Edwards. "But it also goes beyond this single issue."

For one thing, Edwards warns, the controversy will cause some members of Congress to shy away from any future bills that might incur the wrath of the right. Now that right wing troops have made an impact on the Hill, similar cam-

paigns are likely.

"We're more aware now of how opponents of public schools will bend and manipulate issues to suit their own purposes," says NEA's Edwards. "It makes our lobbying that much more crucial."

At presstime, H.R. 6 was slated to clear the House. Then it will be reconciled with the Senate version. Final legislation is expected to emerge this summer.

"Urgent: Enemy Seeks Control of Christian & Home Schools"

The message against H.R. 6 sent by Sound the Trumpet Ministries.

HEROES & ZEROES



A Cold-Hands-Warm-Heart Award to North Dakota physical education teacher Curt

Weinberg, who braved a 35-below wind chill to make good on a promise. When his students met their pledge to bring in 1,000 items for a local food drive, Weinberg spent the night on the roof of Roosevelt Elementary School in Bismarck—in December. With the help of a thick foam pad and a down-filled sleeping bag and comforter, Weinberg said it was "toasty" in his tent. The delusions of the dedicated warm hearts.



A Heroes-at-Ground-Zero Award to Los Angeles teachers Jeff Schwartz and Linda

Gordon, who saved lives when the January quake hit the Northridge Meadows



apartment buildings where they lived—and where 16 people died. The quake "was like a fist from hell," says Schwartz, who was thrown out of bed into total darkness. Schwartz pounded on doors, carried a disabled neighbor out, and rescued an infant, breaking his own ankle in the process. Gordon treated the wounded until paramedics arrived. Comparable superheroes exist only in comic books.



A hallelujah chorus to singer-songwriter Michael Bolton for establishing a foundation to

benefit "women and children who deserve a chance for a better life." With \$500,000 from a recent celebrity tennis match, Bolton says the foundation plans to fund a center for homeless families, a "safe space" for kids in New Haven (where Bolton grew up), a music school, and a center to combat the effects of child abuse.



The Banned-Books Booby

Prize goes this month to the California state Board of Education for caving in to political pressure. When the Traditional Values Coalition protested the use of Pulitzer Prize winner Alice Walker's short story *Roselily* on a statewide exam, state bureaucrats dropped it cold. Next, they excluded another story by Walker, which the board president called "anti-meat eating."

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

Flirting OR HURTING?

'Boys will be boys' won't cut it anymore

A boy in Amy's sophomore English class wouldn't leave her alone. Nearly every day in class, he made obscene remarks to her, poked her, and laughed when she got mad.

One day, he told Amy, "I just dissected a frog, and I'm going to give the frog's [sexual organ] to you."

"It made me feel really disgusted and discouraged," explains Amy, now a senior at the same high school in western Massachusetts. "I felt helpless because I didn't know who to turn to."

Amy confided in a girlfriend. "She said, 'Ignore him. He's a pain, but what can you do? You'll be a baby if you tell.'"

But Amy couldn't ignore him. Her grades were slipping. "I couldn't concentrate. All I could think about was what he was going to do and say next. It made me not want to go to class—and English is

one of my favorite subjects."

Amy told her teacher about the harassment. The teacher moved Amy to the next row. "That made me feel like I was in the wrong," Amy says now.

The final resolution: school ended. Amy, normally an A student, pulled a C in English. And that was that.

At the time, Amy didn't call what was happening to her "sexual harassment." Like generations of girls before her, Amy toughed it out. But girls today don't have to. They have the law on their side.

"Sexual harassment is a part of the daily fabric of school life," says Nan Stein, director of the sexual harassment in schools project at the Wellesley (Massachusetts) College Center for Research on Women. "It's so embedded and so accepted, most adults see it as inevitable."

According to two national surveys conducted last year, the vast majority of teenage girls—and boys—say they've been the targets of sexual harassment at school (see "Hostile Hallways" box).

The most common incidents, according to kids, involve sexual comments and gestures, touching, pinching, and grabbing. Also typical are bra-snapping, skirt-flipping, and drawer-dropping.

Such behavior becomes sexual harassment, most agree, when it is unwelcome, unwanted, and interferes with a student's right to equal educational opportunity. And that's when it becomes illegal under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

Though the law's 22 years old, attention to the issue is relatively new. "The Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings raised the nation's consciousness, and we

now have an administration that believes this is a problem," explains Ellen Vargyas, senior counsel at the National Women's Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Still, she adds, it was a 1992 Supreme Court ruling that brought the issue home. In *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, the Court ruled that students can sue recipients of federal funding (schools or school districts) for sexual harassment claims. And they can win "compensatory damages"—in a word, *money*.

"Now it's clear," Vargyas says. "Schools need to take complaints seriously. They need to have rules and accessible procedures for handling them. And they need to take corrective action."

If they don't, warns Nan Stein, "get ready for the depositions."

Many school districts and NEA members aren't waiting for the lawyers. They're acting now.

Those with successful programs seem to agree on a few key points: Kids want to talk about sexual harassment. Kids learn best from other kids. Kids need to be involved in designing accessible policies and procedures to deal with complaints.

As Rhode Island guidance counselor

Resources

► *Flirting or Hurting?*, 1994. The new NEA curriculum for 6-12 graders written by Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom will be published this summer. For ordering information, write to the NEA Professional Library, Box 509, West Haven, CT 06515, 800/229-4200.

► *Sexual Harassment in Schools*, a videotape produced for Teacher TV by NEA and The Learning Channel. Stock number A050-10119. \$15 plus \$2.50 per tape p&h. NEA Professional Library, Box 509, West Haven, CT 06515, 800/229-4200.

► *Tune In To Your Rights: A Guide for Teenagers about Turning Off Sexual Harassment*, 1985. Also available in Spanish. \$3 includes p&h. Michigan residents add 4 percent sales tax. Make checks out to the University of Michigan. Send to PEO, 1005 School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, 313/763-9910.

► *Hostile Hallways: The AAUW Survey on Sexual Harassment in America's Schools*, 1993. \$11.95 (\$8.95 for AAUW members) plus \$4 p&h. AAUW Sales Office, P.O. Box 251, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701, 800/225-9998, ext. 246.

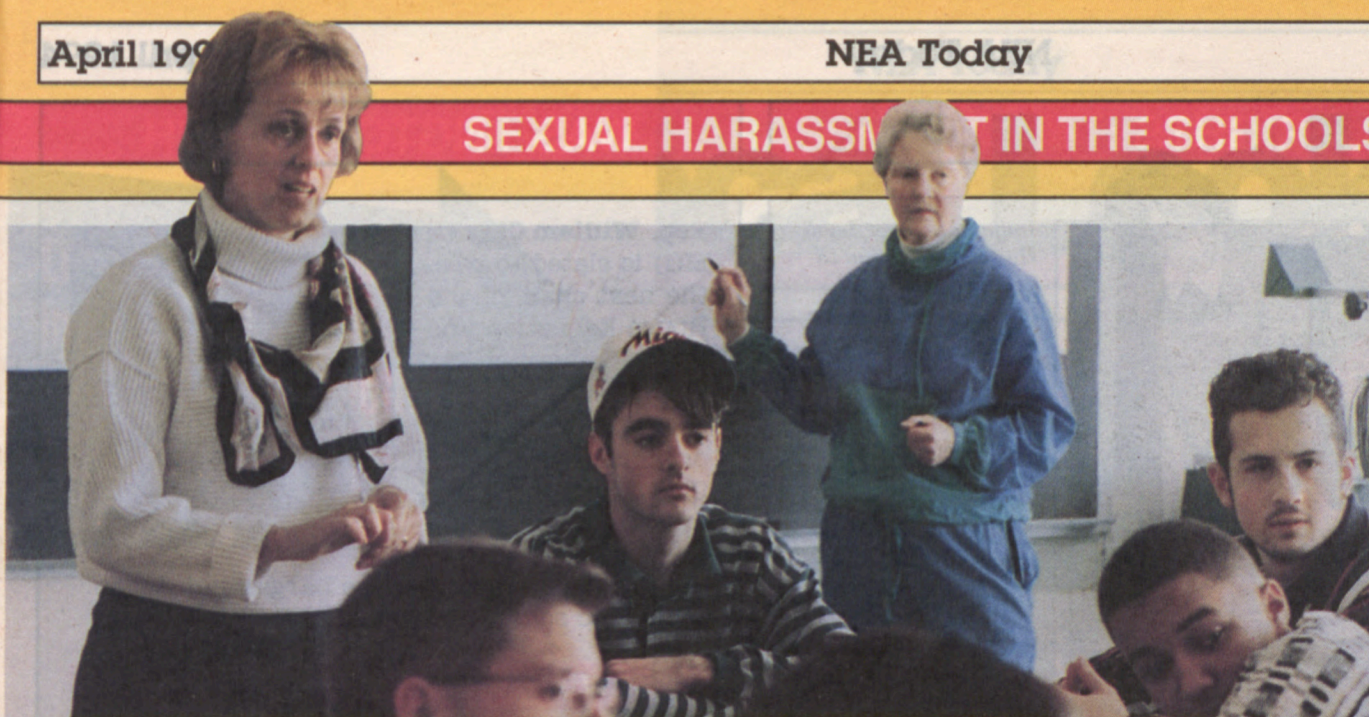
► *Secrets in Public: Sexual Harassment in Our Schools. A report on the results of a Seventeen magazine survey* by Nan Stein, Nancy Marshall, and Linda Tropp, 1993. \$11 includes p&h. Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Publications Dept., 106 Central St., Wellesley, MA 02181, 617/283-2510.



Maury Gash

"The most important thing is to get kids talking about the issues."
—Wisconsin teacher Laurel Hoeth

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE SCHOOLS



Pam Berry

'Hostile Hallways'

Two national surveys released in 1993 show that students find sexual harassment in school a widespread and serious problem.

A Harris poll sponsored by the American Association of University Women reached 1,600 public school students in grades 8-11. Key findings:

- Four out of 5 students—85 percent of girls and 76 percent of boys—report that they have been the target of some form of sexual harassment during their school lives.
- Two-thirds of students have been the targets of sexual comments, jokes, looks, or gestures.
- More than half of the students report having been touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way at school.
- One in 10 students say they have been forced to do something sexual at school other than kissing.
- Of those reporting harassment, 66 percent say it took place in the halls; 55 percent say it took place in the classroom.

A survey by *Seventeen* magazine brought 4,300 responses from girls in grades 2-12. An analysis of 2,000 responses showed a similar percentage of girls reporting sexual harassment in school, with little difference by type of school attended or by racial or ethnic background.



Maureen Tessier says, "We want this to be a student issue. None of our mindsets matches those of 15- and 16-year-olds."

With that in mind, here's what's going on in a few places around the country.

➤ Acting out—on stage—is a popular way students choose to educate each other about sexual harassment. In southwestern Wisconsin, more than 6,000 students over the past three years have seen "Alice in Sexual Assault Land," a 45-minute play about everything from sexual harassment to date rape.

With advice and assistance from NEA teacher-member Laurel Hoeth, the play—full of characters from children's literature—was written and is regularly performed by Stevens Point High School students.

After each performance, the play's actors meet in small groups with students to discuss key messages. The most important goal, says Hoeth, "is to get students comfortable enough to talk about the issues."

➤ Also on stage are students at Ponaganset High School in North Scituate, Rhode Island. With a nudge from principal Richard Oswald and some help from NEA members, students there are putting on skits for the rest of the school.

In one, explains senior Jaime LaPorte, "a boy treats four girls at their lockers in the same way, but they all react differ-

ently." The point: sexual harassment is in the eye of the beholder.

The students are also involved in creating a more accessible policy for dealing with sexual harassment complaints. Their proposed policy encourages targets to go

Framingham, Massachusetts teacher Ellen Makynen (left) is piloting a new NEA curriculum on student sexual harassment.

to harassers—with or without a student advocate or school employee—and ask that the offensive behavior be stopped. Students follow-up with a written note, which they keep a copy of.

If the behavior doesn't stop, the policy allows for peer mediation or intervention by the administration.

➤ At Framingham High School in Massachusetts, consumer and family studies teacher Ellen Makynen is one of 46 teachers to pilot test *Flirting or Hurting?*—a soon-to-be-released NEA Human and Civil Rights curriculum on sexual harassment for students in grades 6-12.

Makynen, who teaches seniors, was surprised at students' interest in the material. "They were very serious about it. They listened to each other and were quite genuine in their responses."

For most students, Makynen explains, there were revelations. "It's quite a moment for kids when they realize that sexual harassment is against the law, and that it can stop if they want it to."

The curriculum has been so popular with students—and parents—that Makynen says school staff will try to offer the unit to others at the high school and to

middle school students as well.

The NEA curriculum will be available nationally soon (see Resources box).

➤ Just outside the Twin Cities in Minnesota, middle school health education teacher Rosemary Fink is in her second year of teaching a brief unit on sexual harassment to eighth graders.

"It's been very well received," Fink says. "The girls say, 'Thanks for telling us we can say no.' And the boys say, 'I'm glad we were told what's unacceptable. We never knew it wasn't right.'"

Teaching the curriculum brought back memories, Fink says. "We're talking about the same behaviors I remember as a kid. There was a certain hall girls just didn't walk down. But I grew up when you just took it or ignored it."

Times have changed—and so has Fink. "A few years ago, when I saw kids standing in the hall eyeing a girl walking by, I was just as uncomfortable as the girl they were eyeing, but I didn't do anything. Now, I'll step in."

"As teachers," Fink notes, "we have to retrain ourselves, too."

—Stefanie Weiss



Pam Berry

"A teacher shouldn't make a target feel like she's got to speak up before an adult will intervene."

—Wellesley College's Nan Stein

Are You Ready To Help? Do You Know How?

What should school employees do when one student sexually harasses another? NEA Today asked Nan Stein, director of the sexual harassment in schools project at the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. A former middle school teacher, Stein has been studying school-based sexual harassment for 15 years.

What should bus drivers do when they hear a group of students taunting a girl?

A driver should say, "I hear what you're saying. If I hear it one more time, I'm turning names in to the principal." Of course, the driver needs to know that the principal and the school's sexual harassment policy will back him or her up.

What should teachers do when they see a skirt-flipping incident?

A teacher should immediately go up to the students. At that point, some girls may say it's okay or it's mutual activity. The teacher must intervene and take names regardless. The teacher should tell the students it's not acceptable school behavior. These events can't be treated like isolated incidents—probably they're not.

What should custodians do when they find sexual graffiti in the bathroom?

A custodian should write it down and report it to the principal, then clean it off immediately. School staff need to treat this kind of targeted message differently from other graffiti.

What should teachers do when they see a boy brushing up against a girl in class?

A teacher should handle such a situation with discretion. The teacher should go over to the students involved and say, "There's too much of something going on here that doesn't need to go on to do your project." A teacher shouldn't make a target feel like she's got to speak up before an adult will intervene.

What should school employees do when they hear students calling another student a "slut"?

An adult can say, "Cut it out. I don't like that kind of talk." It takes time to intervene every single time. Still, students have a right to expect that if something frightening, unpleasant, or illegal is happening in school, someone in authority will intervene to stop it.

HUMAN RIGHTS

An NEA member uses dramatic vignettes to help kids discuss their true feelings about race.

It's called *School Colors*. It's a powerful 45-minute series of vignettes about racial incidents. Instead of following a formal script, student actors improvise scenes based on their own experiences with people of their own and other racial groups. The stage is bare but for three sets of risers. The content is emotionally charged and well-handled.

In one scene, based on a middle-school experience, a Black girl ends a friendship with a white girl after the latter accidentally refers to her family's dislike of "nigger lovers."

In another, a Black student tells an interracial girl to stick with Black kids and build racial pride, and a white student tells her to write "white" on applications so she'll have a better chance in life.

In a third scene, students explore how Black women feel when Black men date white women. And, in a fourth, a white mother of a teenage girl tells her daughter to drop her Black friend, even though the friendship was accepted when they were children.

School Colors began last fall in Jeffersonville (Indiana) High School teacher Jenni Herfel's advanced theater class. A French and theater teacher with 20 years' experience and counselor certification, Herfel was planning the class's first project—writing a play about a current issue.

To stimulate discussion, she reminisced about her visit to some Civil War battlefields and plantations. "Why," she asked,



Christina Freitag

Indiana teacher Jenni Herfel uses drama to get kids thinking about—and solving—racial problems.

lack of choice in everything from immigration and slavery to today's curriculum," she says. Voices rose, and tears flowed on both sides as the students actively listened to painful emotional stories. Admits Herfel, "Even I suddenly understood the adage that the more things change, the more they stay the same."

Seeing that the students had so much they wanted to tell others, Herfel suggested a play.

According to Herfel, the students' eyes and hearts were opened by the creative process that converted stifled feelings and angry outbursts into art. "When a scene became angry," she says, "I stopped it and asked: Is this *all* you want to say? Do you want the audience to be angry? What do you really want your audience to do?"

As the students learned to persuade the audience, Herfel explains, they learned to see themselves not as victims or oppressors who can't speak to each other but as people who can make a difference.

"Some of the kids became friends," says Herfel, "and there's a lot of potential for more friendships."

After the *School Colors* troupe finishes its tour of the community, Herfel and the kids will consider a new play about Native Americans. The Cherokee, Iroquois, and Shawnee have historically lived in Indiana. The mixing, especially within the Black community, has produced rich family traditions that the group wants to talk about and dramatize with a view to dispelling racism.

—Mary Faber

NEA Human and Civil Rights

School Scenes

From Real Life

"do we remember the plantation house but not the slave home? Is it because people in our day feel the same way about race as Americans felt about it 130 years ago?"

It wasn't long before the conversation turned to racism at Jeffersonville High School. With the principal's imprimatur, the discussion extended long past the 55-minute class period, becoming an after-school event attended by 30 to 50 students each day.

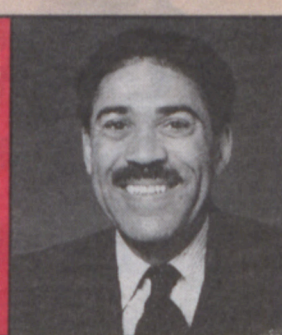
At first, the purpose was information gathering: the theater students interviewed others. But, later, the class invited students from the school's two African-American studies classes to share their views. "That's when change began to occur," says Herfel.

"The Black students talked a lot about ancestors and about

WASHINGTON WATCH

Rep. **William Clay** (D-MO) is slated to be the next chair of the House Education and Labor Committee. A longtime friend of education and of organized labor, Rep. Clay was the first member of Congress to introduce legislation to guarantee collective bargaining rights for public school employees.

Person To Watch



Best Win For Education Employees

The future of federally supported K-12 programs will take a major step forward with House passage—pending at presstime—of a revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The bill would expand most federal education programs and add assistance for professional development, technological improvement, and rural and urban schools.

One to Watch

Congress is considering a bill that will prevent the workplace from becoming your biggest health hazard. The NEA-supported Comprehensive Occupational Safety and Health Reform Act expands OSHA coverage to all state and local governments and requires all employers to establish a joint labor-management health and safety committee and to conduct a health and safety assessment.

And What You Can Do

The health care reform debate has reached the critical stage. Opponents to real health care reform are airing their views loud and clear. If you want quality, affordable health care for all

Americans, there's no time to waste. Address mail to your members of Congress at the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515, or the U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

Political Cartoon of the Month



Signe Wilkinson, Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

Congressional
Quote of the
Month

"Improving education is a community responsibility, but it's also a national imperative."

—Rep. Lynn Woolsey
(D-CA)

Further Reading

► *Can't We All Just Get Along: A Manual for Discussion Programs on Racism and Race Relations* (\$3) and *The Busy Citizen's Discussion Guide: Racism and Race Relations* (\$1). Includes p&h for single copies. Available from Study Circles Resource Center, P.O. Box 697, Pomfret Street, Pomfret, CT 06258.

► *Democracy's Next Generation II: A Study of American Youth on Race*. Available for \$8.95 for members or \$11.95 for non-members (both prices include p&h) from People for the American Way, 2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400, Washington DC 20036.

► *Teaching Tolerance*, a colorful, substantive magazine providing teachers with resources and ideas for promoting harmony in the classroom. Mailed twice a year at no charge to educators. Send name and address on school stationery to *Teaching Tolerance*, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104.

Local Look

CALIFORNIA Board Hoard

In San Jose, the Union District Education Association is going all out to oust four of five board members for a couple of very good reasons.

The board's stinginess is one. The district realized \$11.5 million from the sale of land five years ago but chose simply to hold on to it. Finally, after 18 months without a contract, teachers got promised raises last year. But other problems remain: the school libraries aren't staffed with librarians, only one district nurse serves 10 schools, and science equipment lies in disrepair.

The school board claims it's trying to be prudent. But in a closed session it agreed to keep an unpopular superintendent who left office last August on paid leave until this July—and is paying her an additional \$7,500 a month "consulting" fee.

Parents and teachers alike are outraged. In fact, "The community's leading the way in the recall," says UDEA President Jimmie Lue Hart. "We're the workhorses."

The recall vote is April 12.

UTAH First Served

School support staff from Davis, just outside of Salt Lake City, are the first to join the Association after Utah Education Association delegates cleared the way for ESP membership last fall.

"I've always felt that classifieds need to be involved," says new member LeAnn Unger, a secretary at Orchard Elementary. "We all need to work together to promote education most effectively."

During a statewide teacher walkout in 1990, teachers realized that without the backing of the support staff, their position was much weaker. That began the drive for unification.

The classified employees are now part of the Davis UniServ unit, which includes the 2,000-member Davis Education Association.

PENNSYLVANIA Recession Remedy

For the folks in Clairton and the other Mon Valley towns in Pennsylvania's Rust Belt, economic relief may be on the way.

Governor Casey's budget proposal calls for \$5 million to be divided among school districts whose local economies were hardest hit by the recession.

Clairton is reeling from a prolonged slump that's dropped its tax base from \$109 million in 1975 to \$29 million in 1987. Local leaders aren't celebrating yet. The state legislature

must still approve the budget. And "we're looking to make up for lots of lost revenue," says Ed Christy, UniServ director for the Clairton Education Association.

"But it's a start."

IN OHIO

Student Teachers Learn Quickly



Officers of the Ohio Student Education Association, including Vice-President Kim Walker and Treasurer Mark Schumm (third and second from right, respectively), try to mask their enthusiasm. Inset: OSEA President JoAnn Halbig.

The NEA student members at Bowling Green State University are fast learners when it comes to building a strong Association, and they've got the numbers—550 members—to prove it.

In any given month, membership meetings draw 100 people. Members raise thousands of dollars selling sweatshirts and mugs. Thirteen executive officers lead the way, and they're hardly figureheads.

"We work well as a team," says senior JoAnn Halbig, president of the Bowling Green local, the Ohio Student Education Association. "Each leader does his or her own thing and does a wonderful job of it."

Together they've built the OSEA around eight active, sophisticated committees. There's one for publicity, another for public relations, and a clearly successful social committee. Fundraising, membership, community outreach each has its own committee, and a historian records every meeting and activity.

The seminar committee conducts workshops on topics like job placement and interviewing. Chaired by Vice-President Kim Walker, it's also responsible for providing an education speaker for the monthly meetings—an obligation it has little trouble fulfilling. "People know our name around the city and state," Halbig says confidently. "We have a good network set up."

Halbig attributes OSEA's success over the years to a constantly changing mix of chapter activities, solid NEA benefits such as the educators employment liability insurance available to all new members, strong support from the Bowling Green Education Association, and some special projects, too.

This year, for example, OSEA will take a dozen kids from New York's South Bronx on a week-long camping trip.

And then there's Bowling Green itself. Established in 1910 as a teacher education school, BGSU (enrollment: 15,000) still attracts thousands of prospective teachers to its northwestern Ohio campus.

"People come determined and excited about their major and its extracurriculars," explains Halbig. "And since we're the main active education organization on campus, if people want to get involved, this is where they come."

Being a student member "supplements what you learn in the classroom, providing more contact with real teachers who can give you an idea of what's out there," says Halbig.

Retired teacher Sandy Wasielewski, who heads the Ohio state student organizing effort, feels that "student members gain a respect for what's been accomplished for them."

Adds Wasielewski: "We'll all make the Association stronger in the long run."

TENNESSEE Strike Three?

The Metro Nashville Education Association is making sure that school board members know the high price privatization would exact from the public.

MNEA is stressing that Alternative Public Schools (APS), a company campaigning to take over a city school, would "use public tax dollars to turn a profit," says President Brent Hurst. "They'd be profiting off our kids."

MNEA has given each board member a packet detailing arguments against privatization—points that have been raised in subsequent meetings.

State Senator Ray Albright also opposed APS at a recent school board meeting, noting that it wants more money per pupil to run a school than any school really gets, since APS's figure includes overhead costs.

The two businessmen behind APS have failed in their bid for privatization twice before, at the statehouse and in Nashville last year. MNEA is looking to make them three-time losers.

WISCONSIN Cap's Off

The 3.8 percent wage cap imposed on Wisconsin teachers by state law no longer applies to members of the Madison Teachers Inc. "teacher/professional" bargaining unit.

In fact, MTI has negotiated a total increase of 4.2 percent for each of the next two years.

To break through the ceiling, MTI argued in court that the 1993 law singled out teachers to such an extent that it applied only to bargaining units made up solely of teachers. MTI then noted that of its 2,400 members, 300 aren't teachers as defined in the state statute, so the law didn't apply. The court agreed.

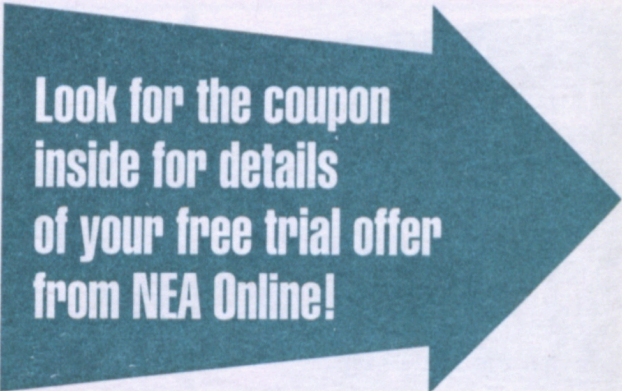
Before the court ruling, the Madison board could simply have offered a package increase of 3.8 percent—which would have brought only a 0.75 percent salary increase—and been exempt from arbitration.

"For units consisting of more than teachers, school boards can no longer hide behind this bargaining law," says MTI Executive Director John Matthews. Look for other locals to follow MTI's lead.

—Leona Hiraoka



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State Side

CONNECTICUT Tied Down

When Connecticut's education reform panel was first formed, legislators vowed that teachers would play a large role—even though only two teachers were named to the 43-person board.

Now, after 18 months of deliberation, the state's Commission on Educational Excellence has issued a report that involves teachers in more paperwork and less innovation.

The CEEC report is "bogged down in convention and bureaucratic politics," says CEA President Robert Eagan, one of the two teachers on the board.

The Commission also wants to tie teacher pay to student achievement. CEA hopes to have the recommendations amended.

NORTH CAROLINA Classified Priority

The North Carolina Association of Educators is pushing for legislation that "gives our ESP members job security and mandates due process," says NCAE organizer Nancy Marrone.

The bill would ensure that school support workers retain their jobs as long as the positions remain funded and receive three weeks' notice if their contracts are to be terminated.

"If we can get it passed, it will eliminate a lot of the political games that have cost people their jobs," says Marrone.

The bill will come up in the short legislative session in May.

LOUISIANA Fighting Back

The Louisiana Association of Educators is stepping up the battle against school violence.

LAE has developed a nine-point plan that calls for, in part, giving teachers more power to discipline students in the classroom, mandating job leave for parents who are called to school to handle disciplinary problems, and providing special programs for disruptive students.

LAE and the state attorney general's office are developing legislation to put the nine-point plan into operation.

The goal, says LAE President Linda Day, is "to provide a violence-free learning environment and protect public education."

THE CLASS OF 2009

Graduate Numbers Back on the Rise

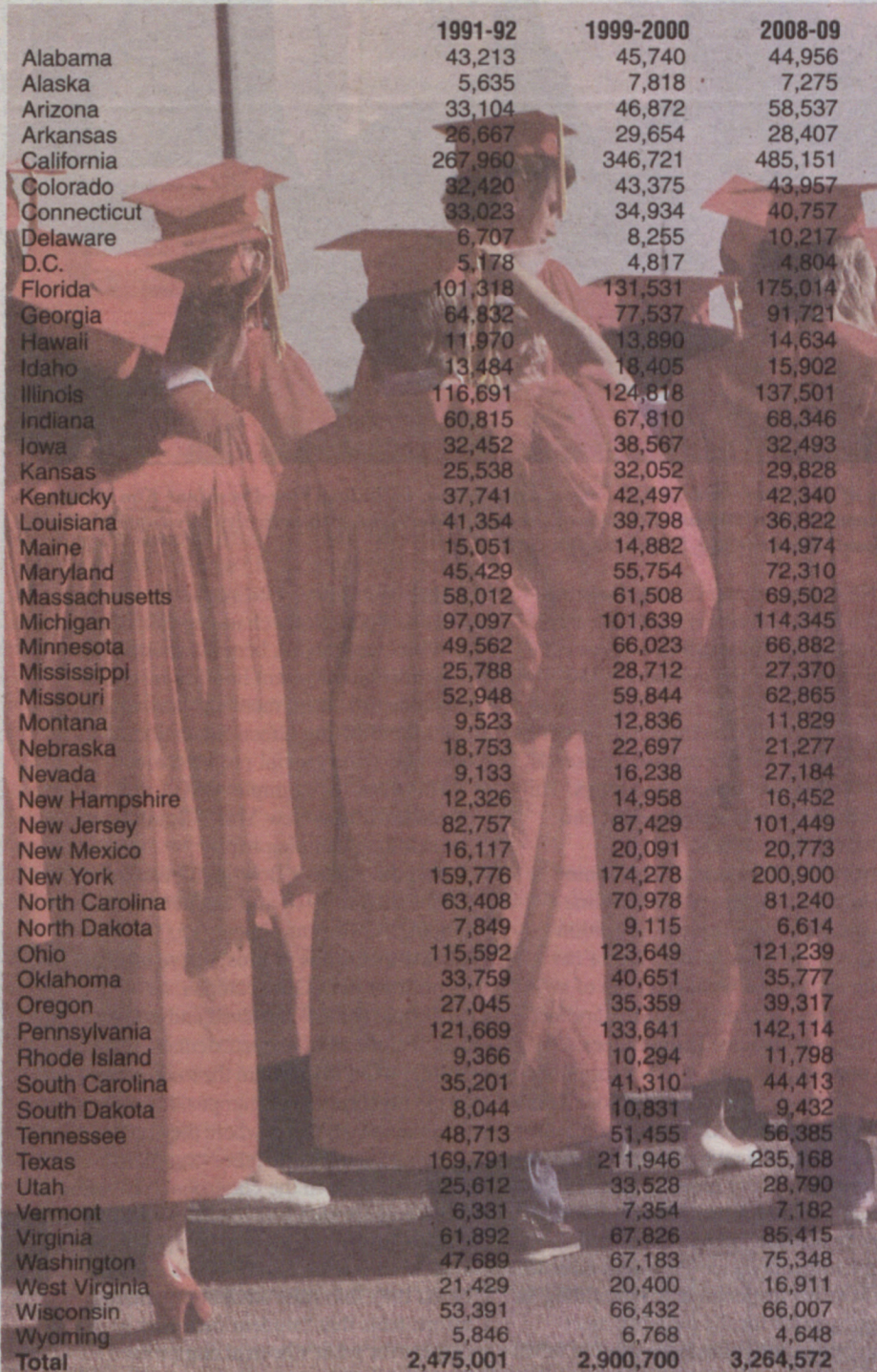
In 2009, more than 3.2 million high school students will receive their diplomas, a 32 percent increase from 1991.

The largest group since the baby boomers, these kids are the product of their own boom—in 1991 the number of births

was 36 percent higher than it was in 1974.

The western United States will see the greatest rise in graduates—65 percent—due to higher birth rates as well as immigration. Nevada looks to gain the most, tripling its graduating class.

Public, Private High School Graduates, Projected To 2008-09



	1991-92	1999-2000	2008-09
Alabama	43,213	45,740	44,956
Alaska	5,635	7,818	7,275
Arizona	33,104	46,872	58,537
Arkansas	26,667	29,654	28,407
California	267,960	346,721	485,151
Colorado	32,420	43,375	43,957
Connecticut	33,023	34,934	40,757
Delaware	6,707	8,255	10,217
D.C.	5,178	4,817	4,804
Florida	101,318	131,531	175,014
Georgia	64,832	77,537	91,721
Hawaii	11,970	13,890	14,634
Idaho	13,484	18,405	15,902
Illinois	116,691	124,818	137,501
Indiana	60,815	67,810	68,346
Iowa	32,452	38,567	32,493
Kansas	25,538	32,052	29,828
Kentucky	37,741	42,497	42,340
Louisiana	41,354	39,798	36,822
Maine	15,051	14,882	14,974
Maryland	45,429	55,754	72,310
Massachusetts	58,012	61,508	69,502
Michigan	97,097	101,639	114,345
Minnesota	49,562	66,023	66,882
Mississippi	25,788	28,712	27,370
Missouri	52,948	59,844	62,865
Montana	9,523	12,836	11,829
Nebraska	18,753	22,697	21,277
Nevada	9,133	16,238	27,184
New Hampshire	12,326	14,958	16,452
New Jersey	82,757	87,429	101,449
New Mexico	16,117	20,091	20,773
New York	159,776	174,278	200,900
North Carolina	63,408	70,978	81,240
North Dakota	7,849	9,115	6,614
Ohio	115,592	123,649	121,239
Oklahoma	33,759	40,651	35,777
Oregon	27,045	35,359	39,317
Pennsylvania	121,669	133,641	142,114
Rhode Island	9,366	10,294	11,798
South Carolina	35,201	41,310	44,413
South Dakota	8,044	10,831	9,432
Tennessee	48,713	51,455	56,385
Texas	169,791	211,946	235,168
Utah	25,612	33,528	28,790
Vermont	6,331	7,354	7,182
Virginia	61,892	67,826	85,415
Washington	47,689	67,183	75,348
West Virginia	21,429	20,400	16,911
Wisconsin	53,391	66,432	66,007
Wyoming	5,846	6,768	4,648
Total	2,475,001	2,900,700	3,264,572

Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, "High School Graduates: Projections by State, 1992-2009," October 1993.

NORTH DAKOTA Four To Go

Three of five justices on the state Supreme Court agree that

the state's method for financing education is unfair, since it's based primarily on local property taxes. But the system remains in place until four or all of the justices agree.

Given the unfair—and inadequate—school funding in the state, it's no surprise that North Dakota teachers' salaries have dropped from 30th in the nation in 1981 to 49th this year.

Teachers, says North Dakota Education Association President Bill Lipp, have purchased so many of their own supplies that the public has been lulled into complacency.

"In reality," he adds, "teachers are struggling to the best of their ability to do their jobs, to educate our children."

COLORADO Standard Setting

The first draft is in from the state council established to develop "content standards" for reading, writing, math, science, history, and geography.

"We're excited about seeing the standards emerge," says Dan Morris, president of the Colorado Education Association.

CEA backed the legislation last year that established academic standards at the state level but left schools to decide how to implement them.

The council's standards focus less on specific facts and more on general skills. In reading, for example, a tenth grade student must be able to discuss symbolism, but not the plot of a specific work of literature.

By August the council must offer final recommendations on what students should know. CEA is encouraging members to review the current draft and provide feedback before the second draft is released in May.

IDAHO Techno-Travels

Twenty-two members of the Idaho Education Association were trained in Boise recently to become the state's traveling technology task force.

Inspired by IEA member Burt Lundak, a math and science teacher who incorporated computers into his classroom, IEA devoted \$50,000 to equipment and program development to increase the use of classroom technology.

To that end, IEA's task force members will train educators around the state, providing them with hands-on computer experience and advice on how to use technology most effectively in the classroom.

"We're pleased we're in the forefront," says IEA President Monica Beaudoin. IEA's work sparked state legislation asking for \$10 million to develop computer literacy in the schools.

—Leona Hiraoka

Meet:

Television was in its infancy in 1951 when Don Herbert began his "Watch Mr. Wizard" TV series, featuring scientific experiments and kids. Today, more than 40 years later, Mr. Wizard is still going strong.

Among Herbert's current projects is the Mr. Wizard TV Science Workshops series, "Teacher to Teacher with Mr. Wizard."

Funded by the National Science Foundation, these 15-minute programs—airing on the Nickelodeon cable channel—highlight exemplary elementary science teachers and projects.

NEA Today staff writer Diane Dismuke talked with Herbert when he was in Washington, D.C. recently to address recipients of the 1993 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching.

How did you become Mr. Wizard, that TV personality who introduced so many of us to the wonders of science? Actually, I was trained to be a science teacher, but I never did teach.

My great interest was the theater—I was active in college productions, then in summer and winter stock. I also did a lot of writing. After serving in World War II, I got an opportunity to act in radio. Then television came along.

I designed "Mr. Wizard" around my own interests and capabilities, and then looked for a market—which is probably just the opposite of what everyone else does.

I found that the Cereal Institute, an organization of cereal manufacturers, was looking to sponsor an educational TV show. They paid for the "Mr. Wizard" facilities and NBC provided the time. That's how I got started.

Where do you get your ideas for experiments?

In the beginning, I went to the library and began looking at "what to do on a rainy day"-type things that would interest kids. Actually, there wasn't much. Since then, there's been a growth of Mr. Wizard kind of books.

Today I have a complete library of demonstration ideas—probably about a thousand volumes, including seven sets of encyclopedias. I also have 18 file drawers of material that I've collected over the years, including scripts and outlines from all my shows.

Did any of your experiments on "Watch Mr. Wizard" ever fail?

Oh, yes. The most memorable incident was an explosion caused by vaporized paraffin in an experiment involving a candle, water, and a bottle. As heat built up in the bottle over the candle, the bottle exploded.

Water scattered all over the child and me, and the bottle came clattering down from the lights and banged on the floor. When the crew saw we weren't hurt, they all laughed. I kept right on going, and explained what had happened. The only

Don 'Mr. Wizard' Herbert



Still a Science Trailblazer

thing cut from the tape before it aired was the laughter.

Usually, when something didn't work, we'd fool around until we made it work, which is exactly what would happen in real life.

What will you say to the Presidential Award recipients?

Mainly, I'll answer questions. Usually folks want to know where I got the children for my shows. We needed kids who were bright, at ease before a camera, and had a sense of humor. Usually we'd find these children in programs for advanced students.

The other question people often ask is how we could do a television show based on science, week after week, and continue to hold audience interest.

The answer is that we used hands-on, inquiry-based science—exactly what educators are bringing into the classrooms today.

To get a child involved, the child must have something to do—that's the hands-on part. There must also be some kind of plot, a problem posed—that's the inquiry part.

It's interesting that this technique we developed in 1951 from an entertainment perspective is now being touted from an education perspective.

What can teachers do to stimulate student interest in science?

One of the problems in the past, especially in the elementary grades, was that teachers weren't well prepared to teach science, so they were somewhat apprehensive.

Now, with hands-on, inquiry-based science teaching, the primary purpose of the lesson isn't so much learning facts as learning problem-solving skills. And that's what we're attempting to illustrate over and over on the new "Teacher to Teacher" TV series.

No, Mr. Wizard doesn't have money to burn. Using a fake dollar bill, a roll of aluminum foil, and a match, Don Herbert demonstrates yet another lesson in practical science.

This series uses television as a distribution medium. People can tape for later use. "Teacher to Teacher" is also unusual because it's designed for teachers rather than for classroom use.

What do you think of the state of science education today?

I'm very encouraged. With the "Teacher to Teacher" series, we're seeing that science education can be exciting. I wasn't encouraged back in the old textbook days when kids were just regurgitating information on tests.

Is there anything you'd like to do on TV that you haven't already done?

I've spent a lot of time working with a microscope, using relatively low magnification. I take things that are part of everyday life and look at them in a new way by getting close to them.

I like to watch a candle burn. In effect, I go into the wick and see all kinds of things happening, because that's where the wick changes from a solid to a liquid and finally to a gas. You can see the convection currents inside the wick.

I'd like to do all this with a TV camera, but I never seem to get the time.

Have you learned anything from working with teachers?

I learned that a teacher's job responsibilities are almost insurmountable. That teachers must be dedicated because of the problems that they face every day. They have my sympathy and my encouragement.

Teaching is one of the most important professions, and teachers don't get the credit they deserve.

F.Y.I.

Mr. Wizard has developed the following materials:

➤ *Mr. Wizard Science Secrets* kits contain clips from "Watch Mr. Wizard" plus equipment for experiments.

➤ *Science 20* videotapes allow science students to take down data and manipulate it while watching the tape.

➤ *Mr. Wizard's Science Video Library* includes 20 videos from the "Mr. Wizard's World" series. Each video has a unifying theme—heat, for example.

➤ *Teacher to Teacher* videos feature outstanding teachers explaining and demonstrating techniques for teaching hands-on, inquiry-based science.

For more information, contact Mr. Wizard Studio, 132 Stagecoach Rd., Bell Canyon, CA 91307.

COVER STORY

Material Kids

ARE ON THE MARCH

The U.S. youth population is up, and the merchandisers are ecstatic. They see a teen spending spree. Schools see problems. Here's what you can do to help your students spend smartly and thrive.

The number of teens is expanding again, after declining from an all-time high of 29.7 million in 1975 to an all-time low of 22.5 million in 1991. The people who sell the stuff that teens buy can hardly contain themselves.

Between 1993 and 2003, according to *Seventeen* magazine's Rand Youth Poll, the

number of teens will increase by 4.4 million—a 20 percent jump.

That's big business. Put another way: the \$70 billion kids, ages 4-18 get from allowances, earnings, and gifts is in the same ballpark as Finland's gross domestic product.

This doesn't even count the \$40 billion of family (as opposed to personal) spending decisions that young people in the United States make or influence.

Numbers like this make the adults who socialize kids, rather than sell to them, uneasy. School staff see two basic shortcomings in the teen/spending nexus: phony values and a virulent orientation to the here-and-now.

"Many kids operate under a false value system," says Deborah Terrell, who teaches eighth grade English in Newark, New Jersey. "They tease—even ostracize—kids who don't have the right things. What they're saying is, 'If it doesn't have the right brand name, it isn't good enough, and if you don't have it, then you're not good enough for us.'"

Terrell is of course referring to the phenomenon by which certain brand name products—Timberland boots, Polo shirts, Starter jackets, NWS EAST-PAK bookbags—become must-have items among certain youth.

"Some kids will steal from someone they perceive as weaker to get the right item," Terrell continues. "One of my students, walking back to his home in the projects, had to give up a leather bomber jacket at gunpoint."

But you don't have to live in the projects to fear violence. "This past winter," Terrell adds, "I wouldn't let my own sons have leather jackets with shearling lin-

The Jar Method for Teaching Kids To Save

Suggest kids give 10 percent of their earnings to charity, then split the rest into three jars:

- *Fun Money.* For immediate spending on movies, baseball cards, sodas.
- *Things and Places.* For short-term saving for items like sweaters and gifts.
- *Big Goals.* For long-term saving for college or major consumer items.

Kids can move money, but only from a shorter- to a longer-term jar. From *Kids, Money and Values* by P. S. Estees and I. Barocas, \$10.95. Betterway Books, 800/289-0963.

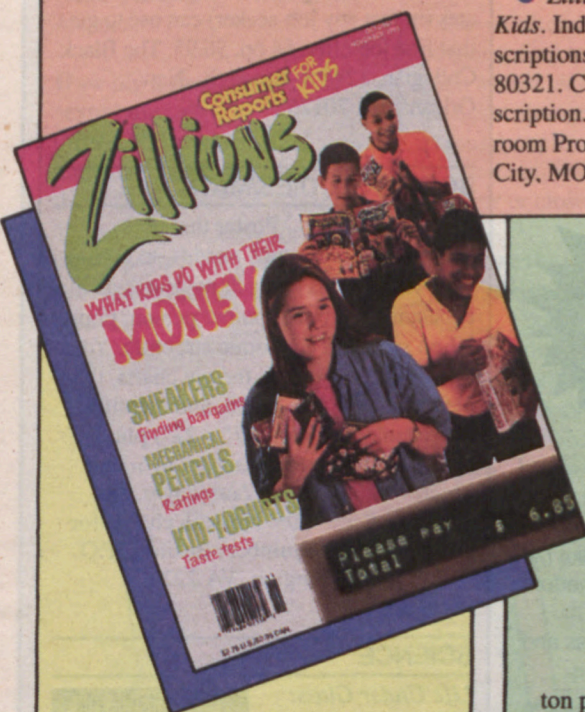
COVER STORY

Smart Spending Guides

Publications are available to help kids sort through a maze of financial questions. One useful assignment: critique the advice offered in the publications from the financial industry.

- **Kids & Money: A Learning Guide for Children.** Free from Fidelity Investments, 800/544-6666.
- **The Kids' Money Book.** Neale S. Godfrey. Checkerboard. \$12.95. In stores.
- **Master Your Future,** videotape and teachers' guide free to teachers of high school juniors and seniors from MasterCard, 800/MC4 Youth.
- **Kids and Money.** Free from Citibank, 800/544-6666.
- **Money Skills: 101 Activities To Teach Your Child About Money.** Bonnie Drew. Career Press Inc. \$9.95. 800/227-3371.
- **Biz Kids Guide to Success: Money-Making Ideas for Young Entrepreneurs.** Terri Thompson. Barron. \$4.95. 800/645-3476.
- **NICE Consumer Credit Education Hotline.** National Institute for Consumer Education, 800/336-NICE.

- **Zillions: Consumer Reports for Kids.** Individuals, 6 issues/\$16. Subscriptions, Box 51777, Boulder, CO 80321. Classrooms, @ \$4.95 per subscription. Subscriptions, Zillions Classroom Program, Box 3760, Jefferson City, MO 65102.



ings—out of fear for what might happen to them.”

Getting and spending also distorts young peoples' use of time, many school staff observe.

“The honest kids work for what they have,” says counselor Carrie Harris, of Sheffield High School, in Memphis, Tennessee. “But they're working longer and later, which causes absenteeism and tardiness. Our school starts early, at 7:30 a.m., and many don't get here.”

Harris also points out that average and below-average students who work never learn to organize their time. “They're less focused than ever on schoolwork,” she says, “and if they do get to college, they have no idea how to use their time to stay there.”

Ironically, the press for conformity among young people is the result of their group effort to be unique. As Sarah Grasso, a ninth grader from Rome, New York, observes: “Fads start with people who are trying to stand out. Then everyone else catches on.”

Catching on to a fad is the way kids establish their identity with the group that caught on a little

before they did. That's what the brand-name loyalties are all about.

Sometimes kids even appropriate particular brand names as their own—quite independent of any marketing effort on the part of the merchandiser—using the logo or distinctive “look” as a kind of private label for their group.

That happened to Pendleton plaid shirts in the '80s, when young Chicano men made them part of the group wardrobe. And to Timberland, the bootmaker, this past winter, when inner-city kids wore knock-off watch caps with the Timberland logo—“knock-off” meaning Timberland had nothing to do with making them.

You could argue, well, that's democratic capitalism, when kids, especially disadvantaged ones, can use cash to appropriate yuppie icons like Pendleton shirts or Timberland sportswear.

But too often the spending on must-have items takes money that youngsters really don't have. Joyce Haynes, a teacher in Opelousas, Louisiana, says, “I think parents are doing without to buy for their children.”

Janice Mitich, a fifth grade teacher in Tucson, Arizona, sees the media hype about spending as “society's subtle way of putting down people without money. Disadvantaged kids and their parents try to buy status.”

Though attitudes about spending are formed way beyond school boundaries, many schools try to teach students to become thoughtful spenders as well as smart shoppers.

For Bonnie Denton, a home arts teacher in Calvert County, Mary-

land and Herb Hinz, a sixth grade teacher in Utica, Michigan, the curriculum has always been a place for driving home consumer truths. Denton recently had her students help their parents find ways to save water, and Hinz regularly teaches a two-week unit that sets up a small-scale economy for kids to run.

Denton and Hinz are also among the several dozen teachers nationwide who do consumer research with their classes for *Zillions* magazine, the junior version of *Consumer Reports*. (See box, “Smart Spending Guides.”)

“Kids need to know there are

options, to see what's out there in quality and cost. Buying the first thing they see isn't good,” Hinz says.

So *Zillions* has kids test everything from breakfast cereal to video games. Recently Hinz's students tested 20 backpacks for *Zillions*.

“The labels were ripped off so the kids didn't know which brands they had,” Hinz says. “But some of the most popular with labels are disdained for those without. They're disliked so much that no one would even be seen with them!”

Thus do the teenage tastemakers speak. —Nancy R. Needham

In Japan, 'Cheenayjas' Have a Yen To Spend

The average Japanese “cheenayja” (a Japanese adaptation of “teenager”) has yen equivalent to about \$1,200 to spend at any one time, says Boston University/Harvard sociologist Merry White. White analyzes the economic side of Japanese students in her latest book, *The Material Child* (Free Press, \$22.95).

“Spending money is the favorite activity of Japanese teenagers,” White explains. “They go to the department stores with their friends on what's become virtually compulsory group shopping trips on Sunday afternoons.

“Like American mallies, Japanese kids spend to establish an identity: you are who you are by the stuff you've got.”

But, unlike American kids, Japanese kids don't get allowances or work outside the home. “Parents give them money as needed—as requested,” White says.

“Japanese youth still have their famous examinations to keep them in line,” White continues. “Yet they are becoming more like American youth. Their society is developing social classes. Kids who do not have the support of wealthy parents are not getting into the top universities.

“That changes their ideas about the present, which becomes less a time for preparation, more a time for a last fling at freedom.” —N.R.N.



RESOURCES

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School-Based Change. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. Learn from six real-life examples how teachers deal with the challenges of school-based change, including resis-

tance to change, time constraints, and out-comes-based education. 96 pp. Stock no. 2905-4-00-FF. \$9.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516. 800/229-4200; FAX 203/933-5276.



ENGLISH/HISTORY

American Authors and Civil War Generals. Posters of 12 prominent American

writers (Hawthorne, Dickinson, Fitzgerald, Wright, Whitman, and Twain are shown) and 12 Civil War generals (six Union, six Confederate)—along with



quotes from each. 24" x 36." \$6 each (special NEA price) plus \$2.50 p&h per order. Specify "authors" or "generals." Yankee Ingenuities, Ltd., P.O. Box 7305, McLean, VA 22106.

COUNSELING

How I Got My Dream Job—And How You Can Get Yours, Too! Scott V. Edwards. A

1993 Howard University graduate (B.B.A. in finance) improves upon his own successful job-hunting tactics as he outlines strategies other Black graduates (in fact any job-seeker) can use to get that first job offer. 84 pp. \$6.95. The Black Collegian, 1240 S. Broad St., New Orleans, LA 70125.



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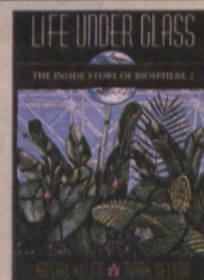
SOCIAL STUDIES/MATH

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SCIENCE

Life Under Glass: The Inside Story of Biosphere 2. Abigail Alling, Mark Nelson, and Sally Silverstone. Now it

can be told! Three of the eight "biospherians" describe what it was like to spend two years living, working, and producing all their own food in the artificial environment of Biosphere 2. 288 pp. (including 16 pp. color insert). \$16.95 plus \$3.50 p&h. The Biosphere Press, 800/992-4603, FAX 602/825-6471. (Ask for free catalog.)



PHYSICAL EDUCATION/FITNESS

Ideas for Action. A cooperative project of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, and the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

Manual presents ideas for activities to promote youth fitness—organized by elementary, middle school, secondary level. Three-ring binder format allows charts and forms to be removed for photocopying. 250 pp. \$10 prepaid (includes p&h) to SGMA/Ideas for Action, Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, 200 Castlewood Dr., North Palm Beach, FL 33408.

Health

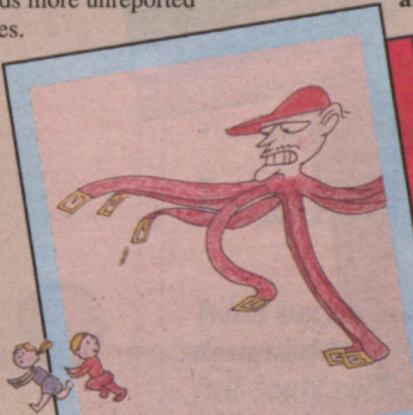


Brian Abbott, M.D., is executive director of the Giaretto Institute in San Jose, California, which operates the

first child sexual abuse treatment program established worldwide. A respected clinician, trainer, and researcher, Dr. Abbott has been working in the field of child sexual abuse for 16 years. He recently spoke with NEA Today staff writer Anita Merina.

How big a problem is child sexual abuse?

Over 1,100 cases of child sexual abuse are reported every day in the U.S.—more than 400,000 cases each year. And for every case reported there are thousands more unreported cases.



Curt's father is depicted as an octopus with belts for arms. Twelve-year-old Curt was physically abused by his father and eventually placed in foster care for two years. His family was reunited after extensive therapy.

Even more alarming, the predictions resulting from recent studies say that one out of every three females and one out of seven males will be sexually abused by their 18th birthday.

Is there a "typical case" of child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse cases vary quite remarkably, with victims ranging from infants to young adults. Consequently, the abusive behavior varies, from the offender rubbing against an infant to having sexual intercourse with a teenager.

What's most common, however, is that the cases usually involve someone close to the child, either a parent or another trusted adult.

Is there an age group that's most at risk?

The bulk of the cases seem to be elementary school-age children.

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn

child ABUSE

These children are often fondled or forced to touch the adult abuser. And the abuser is not some stranger in a raincoat, as most people would think, but, more typically, a family member or close friend.

What are the causes of such abuse?

Studies have shown that many of the children are caught in an intergenerational cycle of abuse. In 88 percent of all cases, the perpetrator is a family member; 80 percent of sexually abusive fathers and physically abusive mothers were abused children themselves.

What are the signs of sexual abuse?

There are some behavioral signs that may indicate a child's been sexually abused. If children show evidence of unusual sexual behavior or knowledge outside the realm of knowledge for their age group, that may be a good clue.

For example, if you see a seven- or eight-year-old talking about sexual or anal intercourse or five-year-old children who simulate sexual acts or excessively masturbate—even after they're disciplined—there's enough abnormal behavior for a concerned school worker to take action.

What can school employees do when they suspect abuse?

Every school has a child abuse reporting protocol, so check first with your principal or district officials. In most cases, you must contact the local

child protection agency or law enforcement agency. Remember, you only have to have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused to report it. The law enforcement and child protection agencies will do the rest.

How should school personnel respond when a child says he or she's been abused?

The most important thing to do is to listen to the child. Be supportive. And try not to communicate any disbelief, because what's most devastating to a child is disbelief or inaction.

Why is it so devastating?

Because children often blame themselves for the occurrence of abuse. The typical victim believes the parent is a loving, caring individual and places enormous trust in the parent. When that trust is betrayed by sexual abuse, the only way for the child to make sense of it is to place the blame inward. The child says, "I must be a bad child if this is happening to me."

That guilt and self-blame are the reasons why so many cases go underreported. The worst thing that can happen is if a child risks everything by speaking up, then receives little or no response.

What shouldn't educators do?

If you have a suspicion and plan to make a report, don't contact the parents right away. Often, the parents can get hold of the child before the authorities are involved and create enough pressure to change the child's story. Let the authorities handle it.

Also, don't question the child about details of the abuse. You only have to have reasonable suspicion, not a detailed story. Any person

who tries to get too many details may conduct inappropriate interviewing, and the child's story may become contaminated.

What should staff do when an abused child acts out?

If you have a child who you know has been sexually abused and that child becomes a problem in class, it's very important to treat the child as you would any other student. Some educators may have heard details of the child's story and decide to treat the child in a special way, but that can backfire.

How?

Inside a child's mind, that special treatment may actually reinforce the negative self-image the child has. They may think, "I'm so bad that Mrs. Smith has to treat me differently from the rest of the students." So instead of having a positive effect, the teacher's behavior just exacerbates the problem.

Instead, don't allow the child to get away with the offending classroom behavior. Be consistent in setting limits—and deliver on any consequences you've threatened.

It's okay to maintain an empathic relationship with the child. You can talk to the child alone and say, "I know you're upset about what's happened to you, and sometimes it's hard to behave; that's why we're having this talk. If you're upset, it's okay to come and talk about it, too."

By doing this, you separate the abuse and the acting out. You continue the normal classroom expectations, and you offer an alternative to acting out in class. That's much healthier for the child.

What's unique about the Institute's treatment method?

The Giaretto Institute was created in 1971 because of the growing number of family-related child abuse cases.

We believe that it's important to treat the entire family in such cases. We use a combination of traditional mental health counseling, individual and family counseling, and structured activities. Through our program, child victims and families see they're not alone in this, which decreases the isolation and shame felt in these situations.

We also train a number of our adult clients to give presentations—together with trained staff—to schools and community groups.

I understand you're the adviser for an upcoming television program.

Yes. I'm excited about a special program, *Break the Silence: Kids Against Child Abuse*, airing on network television in May. It uses illustrations [like the two on this page] and interviews with young survivors in a powerful way. (See "TV Tips," page 16 for details).



Anthony, age 5, receives a hug and comfort from his stepfather, Joey, after telling Joey that he had been sexually abused by the older son of a family friend for nearly a year. The abuser was convicted with the help of Anthony's testimony.



The new kid at school says veggies are cool.

His name is Willie Munchright™ and he's the host of **What's On Your Plate®**. It's a program created by McDonald's® and the Society for Nutrition Education to help you teach your class all about eating right. The program includes a video of Willie's Public Service Announcements, as seen Saturday mornings on CBS, a leader guide

with a colorful poster illustrating the Food Guide Pyramid and a student activity brochure.

Or you can choose **Healthy Growing Up™**, a group of lessons and activities for kids in kindergarten through third grade. They focus on self-esteem and fitness as well as nutrition, and have earned the support of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.



Health and nutrition are an important part of a child's education. Use these teaching aids to help guide your class to a healthier, more active lifestyle in a fun and interesting way. For more information on these and other programs, write: McDonald's Education Resource Center, ADS, P.O. Box 8002, St. Charles, IL 60147, or call 1-800-627-7646.



Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work



Business education and computer science teacher Vivian Warner (standing) looks over a model rocket with students from Frederick High School. Launch date is April 27.

Learning Through the Ages

What began last summer as a curriculum project designed by eight teachers has ballooned into a full-scale rocket launch involving 10 schools and 300 students from kindergarten to college.

Last summer, a workshop brought eight Frederick County, Maryland high school and middle school teachers together in a brainstorming session. Their charge: to find a way to link different disciplines and grade levels. Their challenge: to use normal, natural, and appropriate activities for the curriculum.

"Those are the principles of vertical integration," says Vivian Warner, a business education and computer science teacher at Frederick High School.

"The idea behind true vertical integration is to have all students and teachers working toward a common goal and yet doing so through the natural course of their classes. Anything else would be forcing students into a project that's abnormal, unnatural, and inappropriate for their levels of learning."

What the teachers came up with, says Warner, was a joint rocketry project that will culminate in a rocket launch later this month.

Brendan Hedges, a machine and technology teacher at Frederick

County's Career and Technology Center, came up with the idea.

"You can compare vertical integration with making rock candy," explains Hedges. "With rock candy, the crystals form around a single thread, each sugar crystal building onto another creating a single piece of candy with interlocking pieces. That's how I viewed the challenge before us. I thought rockets would make a great thread for our work."

The other teachers agreed and Operation Launch, a county-wide rocketry project, was not only created, but quickly expanded. Currently, 22 teachers and more than 300 students at 10 schools around the county are involved.

"From the moment we began discussing the project in September, teachers began to jump on board," says Vivian Warner, now the project's main facilitator. "One of the English teachers offered to have her class compose letters to local, state, and national dignitaries inviting them to the launch."

"The journalism teachers offered to do the press releases. I

offered to have my business education students do the word processing. Brendan offered his machine technology students to build the rockets and payloads."

Even more exciting, says Warner, was how teachers at various grade levels, subject areas, and schools began to use the rocketry project in their curriculum.

"We now have home economics students who will be using the rocket project in a class session on children's toys—specifically toy rockets," explains Warner.

"We have business management students organizing and running many of the planning sessions, science and physics students working on the data collection, and telecommunications students filming the launch."

"At the middle school level, sixth grade classes will be using the clinometers they've built in class to measure the rockets' flight," adds Hedges. "Each school will have one rocket, decorated by the school's art class. And at the elementary school level, students will use the data from the April 27 launch for real-life math problems."

Even Frederick Community College faculty have joined the project, offering engineering students who'll compare their predictions of gravity load and acceleration with actual data from the impulse models.

"What's most important here, is that we're merging academic classes with vocational ones, art with science, first-grade with tenth grade, all for a common goal," says Warner.

"Our students are learning not only the subject matter of their classes, they're learning how these lessons and activities are interrelated in real-life applications."

James Coblenz, an eleventh grader who designed the payloads of metal weights that will travel in each rocket, agrees. "I've had a chance to take so much of what I've learned in class and transfer it to creating these rockets," says Coblenz. "At the same time, I've had the opportunity to show others how rockets and payloads work."

The project has also had an additional benefit, Warner says. "When we integrated the curriculum, we also broke down the barriers in perception about one another. I was no longer viewed as a business education teacher,

someone lower in status than the academic teachers, but a person who was teaching a multitude of applicable skills."

That wasn't easy, says Warner, nor was the simple coordination of the teachers' activities. "When you have 10 schools, you have 10 different challenges in time, transportation, and energy."

Still, Hedges says, when the rockets take flight on April 27, so will many of the teachers' high hopes about the success of vertical integration.

"The ultimate goal of all of this is learning," he adds. "That has to happen throughout, and that's what we'll look for when we evaluate the results of this project. If our students are learning, that's all that matters."

Schools involved: W. Frederick Middle School, Ballinger Creek Middle School, Monocacy Middle School, Gov. Thomas Johnson High School, Frederick High School, Middletown High School, Walkersville High School, Frederick Community College, Frederick County Career and Technology Center, and Hillcrest Elementary School.

—Anita Merina

More About School Change

NEA members changing the way schools work have a new medium—*Teaching and Change*—the newest professional journal by and for teacher practitioners.

Highlights of the spring '94 issue include articles on learning teams at the secondary level, assessment in an integrative curriculum, parent involvement, student-generated standards, gender differences in computer use, and the use of learning styles to construct cooperative learning groups.

Teaching and Change is co-published quarterly by the NEA Professional Library and Corwin Press. For subscription details, call 800/229-4200.

If you're interested in writing for the journal, contact Karen Zaubner, Editor, *Teaching and Change*, NEA-National Center for Innovation, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7785.

RESOURCES

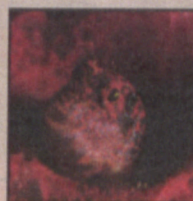
TV Tips

TLC Elementary School: The Food Pyramid—*The Learning Channel, Tuesday, April 12, 4-5 a.m. ET.* In this episode, colorful graphics provide a look at the new food pyramid. Visits to farms and factories show how some of the foods on the pyramid are produced. (No restrictions on taping.)

The American Experience: America and the Holocaust—*PBS, Wednesday, April 13, 9-10 p.m. ET.* This program dissects America's response to the Holocaust, exploring the social and political factors that affected government policy from "Kristallnacht" in 1938 to the liberation of the death camps in 1945.

National Geographic Special: Jewels of the Caribbean Sea—*PBS, Wednesday, April 13, 8-9 p.m. ET.* This program fol-

lows a group of divers and treats viewers to extraordinary scenes of marine-life behavior in the beautiful underwater world of the Caribbean.



Bob Kravitz

Afterschool Special: Boys Will Be Boys—*ABC, Thursday, April 21, 4-5 p.m. ET.* In this program, graffiti on a

bathroom wall leads to the harassment of a teenage girl and shows just how damaging gossip can be.

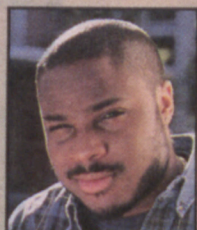
Bedtime With Barney—*NBC, Sunday, April 24, 7-8 p.m. ET.* This one-hour, prime-time special marks the first appearance of this popular children's television character on network TV.



Assignment Discovery: Leonardo's Legacy—*The Discovery Channel, Monday, April 25, 9-10 a.m. ET.* This episode looks at this remarkable artist, inventor, writer, and philosopher and the inventions he created that still amaze scientists 500 years later.

Kids Killing

Kids—*CBS, Fox, Tuesday, April 26, 8-9 p.m. ET.* This one-hour, commercial-free special, part of a week-long anti-violence campaign, uses the "retake" to give its teenage characters a chance to undo the death and destruction caused by their use of firearms. What would have happened if a gun wasn't available?



Mary Branton/CBS

City—*PBS, Sunday, May 8, 8-9 p.m. ET.* This animated and live-action special is based on the book of the same name by acclaimed author-illustrator David Macaulay. It tells the story of life in a city at the height of the Roman Empire, through the eyes of one of its architects and engineers.

Break the Silence: Kids Against Child Abuse—*CBS, Tuesday, May 31, 8-8:30 p.m. ET.* This half-hour, prime-time documentary tells the personal stories of four courageous children who have survived and triumphed over abuse. A complementary educational curriculum (grades 3-8) developed by the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Scholastic, Inc. will be distributed to schools throughout the country. April is National Child Abuse Awareness month (also see Student Health, page 13).

Listings are provided by KIDSNET, a clearinghouse for children's TV and radio in Washington, D.C.

Teacher TV

Don't forget to tune into *Teacher TV*, the weekly magazine-style program coproduced by NEA and The Learning Channel. *Teacher TV* airs Sunday evenings, 6-6:30 p.m. ET. Here's a list of upcoming episodes:

- April 10: Active Learning
- April 17: Alternative Assessment
- April 24: Curriculum Innovations
- May 1: Dealing With Disasters
- May 8: Violence in the Schools: Solutions That Work

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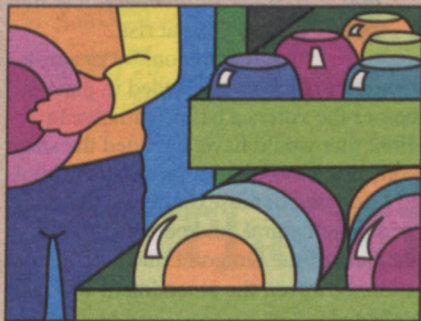
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IDEA EXCHANGE

Good Deeds

I ask each of my sixth grade social studies students to perform a good deed before entering my class each day. They record their deeds in their notebooks, and each Friday we discuss what they've done.



As a result of this project, my students are now unloading family dishwashers, helping younger brothers and sisters with spelling, and writing to grandparents. Plus they're gaining a sense of accomplishment and pride.

My sixth graders challenge students everywhere to do one good deed a day. We all agree that our world would be a better place if everyone accepted that challenge.

Stephanie Kammerlin
Heard County Middle School
Franklin, Georgia

Adopting World Leaders

To make social studies come alive for my seventh graders, I've created a project that I call Adopt-a-World-Leader.

I ask each of my students to select a country anywhere in the world and write to its head of state.

In their letters, students request all kinds of information about the nation's history, geography, educational system, and government.

Surprisingly, the responses to these letters have been phenomenal. They include hand-signed replies, autographed photos, maps, videos, books—even the names and addresses of potential pen pals.

Because of their personal involvement, my students learn more and are very willing to conduct research projects on these countries.

Howard Smith
South Pasadena Middle School
South Pasadena, California

Caring and Sharing

Sixth graders in my home economics/life management class are learning first-hand how they can help others.

The students donate their used books to less fortunate youngsters in special reading classes at a school in another district in our state. My daughter, Charlene Mock Rohn, is the reading teacher there.

My students send their names and addresses along with the books, and the recipients write back to them. This lesson in caring and sharing beyond their immediate school community makes quite an impact on students.

Sandra Mock
Hershey Middle School
Hershey, Pennsylvania

Rewarding Reading

As library media specialist at my school, I sponsor contests throughout the year that encourage students to read.

Several times a year, I place pieces of candy in a jar. By reading a book, any student can enter a contest to guess how many pieces of candy are in it. In October, the jar is filled with candy corn; in February, candy hearts; in April, jelly beans; and so on.

Each additional book a child reads merits another guess.

For me, it was exhilarating to hear a student say that he never used to read books he checked out of the library, but since I started the contests, he's read every book he's checked out.

Melanie Harless
Linden Elementary School
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Note: NEA Today regrets that in the December 1993 issue, this column inadvertently reversed

two names and ideas. Lisa Farabaugh should have been credited for the Parents Who Teach idea, and Carolyn R. Smith for the Family Homework, Family Fun idea.

NEA Today invites submissions. Pass along your tips via NEA Online, or write to Idea Exchange, NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Be sure to include the name of your local Association and school, the subject and grade you teach, and your school and home phone numbers.

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LEGAL TIMES

"John Doe" (he asked that his name not be used) had been a teacher in Pennsylvania's Mohawk Area School District for more than 20 years and had a spotless record.

On August 17, 1990, he met a man on a Youngstown street and invited him to his home for consensual sex. When they arrived, the man—later identified as Daniel Vasquez—pulled out a knife and threatened to kill Doe.

Vasquez then tied Doe to the bed with an electrical cord, gagged him so he couldn't scream, and beat him severely in the face. He later ransacked the house, beat Doe a second time, stole a number of personal possessions, set the house on fire, and drove away in Doe's car.

A neighbor saw the fire and called the fire department. Doe was in a state of unconsciousness when rescued and remained hospitalized for five days.

Doe reported the crime to the police, and the local newspaper printed a story about the vicious attack. As a result, several parents telephoned the Mohawk school superintendent and asked whether Doe would be allowed to return to the classroom.

The superintendent notified the school board, which voted to fire Doe for "immorality." By "soliciting a person to engage in certain sexual activities," the board said, Doe "offended the morals of the community" and set "a bad example to the youth whose ideals a teacher is supposed to foster."

With help from Pennsylvania State Education Association attorney Todd Park, Doe grieved his dismissal under the collective bargaining agreement.

Arbitrator Charles Mullin ruled that the school district did not have "just cause" to fire Doe. In his 12-page opinion, Mullin held that there was no evidence that Doe's conduct rendered him "unable to perform the requirements of a classroom teacher."

Six months after he was fired, Doe was reinstated to his teaching position with back pay and benefits.

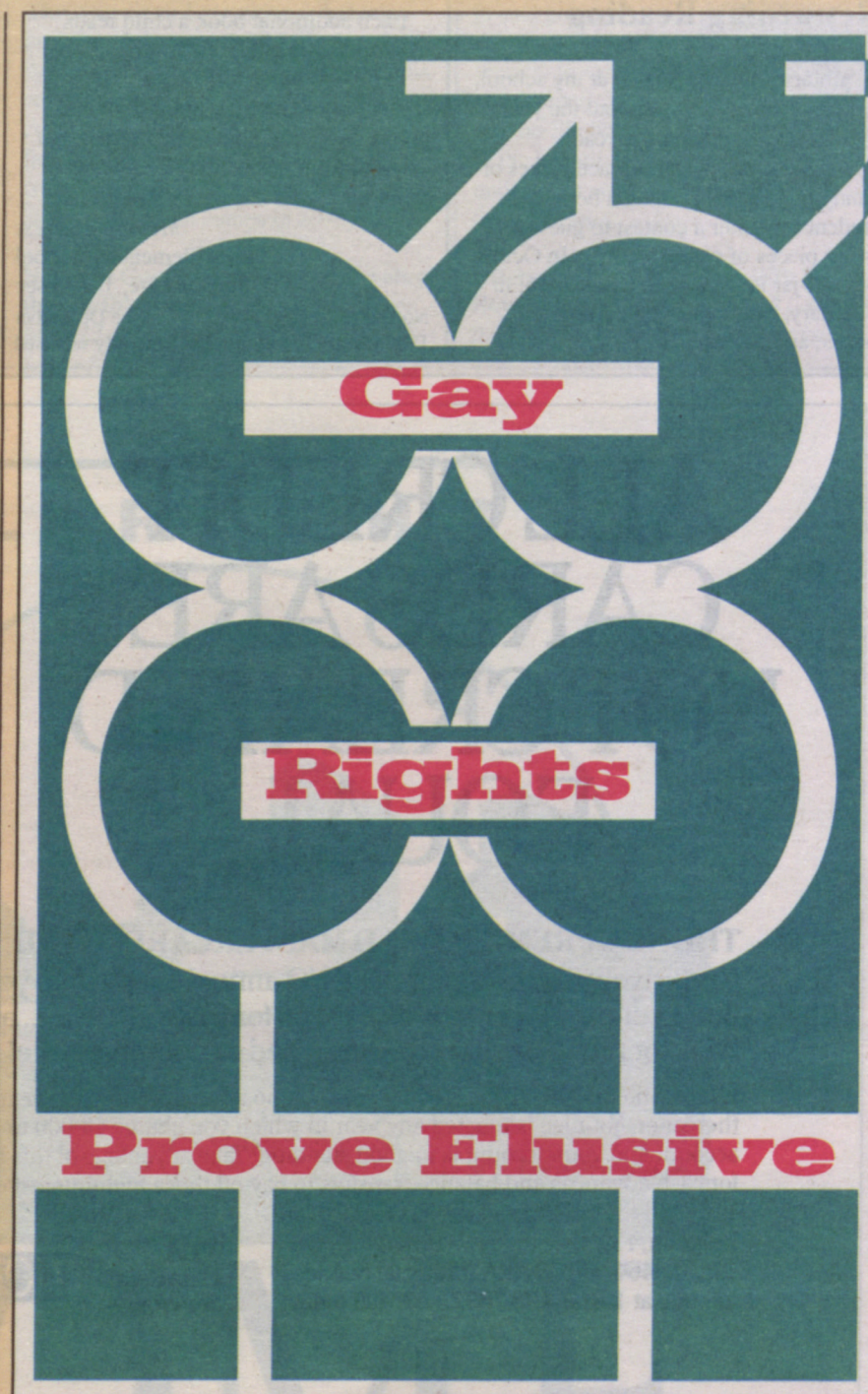
And what happened to Daniel Vasquez? He was caught, prosecuted, and convicted of attempted aggravated murder, arson, and robbery and sentenced to a term of 37 to 75 years in jail.

Unfortunately, most cases of discrimination against gay teachers do not end as happily as John Doe's. There is no federal law that prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and only a handful of states have outlawed the practice.

For this reason, advocates for gay rights have looked to the U.S. Constitution for protection, arguing in federal court that it is a violation of the right to privacy or equal protection for the state to fire a public employee because he or she is homosexual.

Although NEA has been in the forefront of this legal battle for more than 20 years, efforts to end this form of discrimination have not been very successful.

Fairly typical is the case of Marge Rowland, a non-tenured high school guidance counselor (and mother of three) who lost her job after she confided to her



When Mohawk Area (Pennsylvania) School Board members learned that a district teacher had been beaten, robbed, and left for dead, they took swift action: they fired him. Why? Because they found out he was gay.

secretary that she was bisexual.

The "crime" for which she was transferred to a position with no student contact and then nonrenewed was uttering the words, "My love is for a woman."

With funding from NEA and the Ohio Education Association, Rowland sued the Mad River (Ohio) Local School District in federal court. A jury found that Rowland's nonrenewal violated her freedom of speech and her right to equal protection of the laws and awarded her \$55,000 in damages.

In a 1984 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit reversed the jury's decision. The court said that, because Rowland's speech dealt with a matter of only "personal" interest, it was not constitutionally protected. The court also rejected her equal protection claim on the ground that there was "no evidence of how other employees with different sexual preferences were treated."

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review the Rowland case.

Most legal observers believe that it's simply a matter of time before the Supreme Court definitively rules that discrimination against homosexuals violates the Constitution.

"Lesbians and gay men are looking for their *Brown v. Board of Education*," says William B. Rubenstein, director of the ACLU's national Lesbian and Gay Rights Project.

But for NEA members, in particular, the issue of gay rights goes far beyond employment discrimination against homosexuals.

The religious right has now put gay-bashing at the top of its agenda. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "Homosexuality is becoming the major issue that drives the concerns of white evangelical Christians."

The right wing's goal is nothing short of forcing teachers to indoctrinate school children to hate gay men and lesbians.

"Straight" teachers who try to teach tolerance and the value of diversity may find their jobs at risk.

In Oregon, for example, the religious right succeeded in placing before the voters a ballot initiative in 1992 that would have amended the state constitution to require the public schools to teach that homosexuality is "abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse." With the help of the Oregon Education Association, however, the amendment was defeated.

In Colorado, voters in the 1992 election approved Amendment 2 to the state constitution. It prohibits school districts, cities, and the state legislature from enacting any law or policy banning discrimination against gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals.

The amendment was challenged in court, and in January 1993, a Denver state court declared the measure unconstitutional and stopped its enforcement.

The state appealed the decision to the Colorado Supreme Court, and NEA and the Colorado Education Association filed a friend-of-the-court brief in support of the lower court decision.

Citing studies finding that 45 percent of gay males and nearly 20 percent of lesbians experienced physical assault or verbal abuse in secondary schools and that suicide is the leading cause of death among gay and lesbian youth, the NEA/CEA brief argued that the public schools "must display particular concern for gay and lesbian students."

In a July 1993 decision, the Colorado Supreme Court held that Amendment 2 violates the Equal Protection Clause and upheld the preliminary injunction against its implementation.

The religious right has even attempted to prohibit public school teachers from speaking out in favor of gay rights. In 1984, NEA joined in a successful challenge to an Oklahoma state law providing for the dismissal or suspension of any teacher who publicly "advocates" or "encourages" homosexual activity.

In striking down the statute, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals said that the law could apply to "a teacher who went before the Oklahoma legislature or appeared on television to urge the repeal of the Oklahoma anti-sodomy statute." Even public school teachers, the court said, have the right under the First Amendment to speak out on matters of public concern.

The fight is far from over. As *Newsweek* recently reported, "A well-coordinated counter-offensive by the religious right is underway in city halls, school boards and state legislatures to stymie—and even roll back—what its leaders regard as an intolerable gay advance out of the closet and into the social mainstream."

—Michael Simpson

NEA Office of General Counsel

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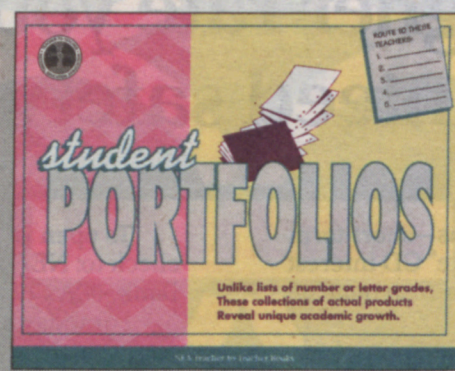
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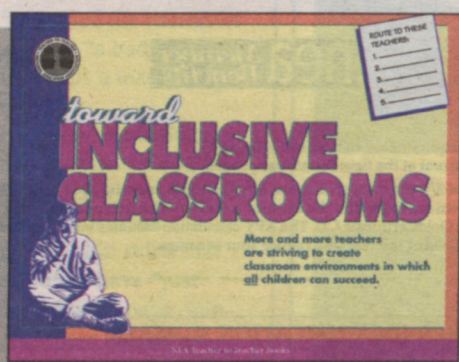
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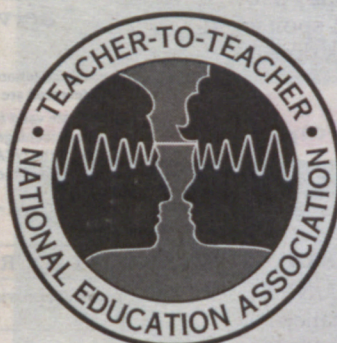
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SOUNDING BOARD

Three years ago, seniors at Kingswood Regional High School chose head custodian Bob Rivera and his custodial partner Peter Yates to be their commencement speakers.

The honor brought great attention to the two members of the Governor Wentworth Support Staff Association in rural New Hampshire. They got hundreds of calls from the media requesting interviews and received several hundred cards and letters every day for months—some with flowers or dollar bills, many with comments from people proud of custodians in their own families.

Why were they so honored? Rivera, in a roundabout way, explains.

By Bob Rivera

It's 7 a.m. at Kingswood, and the director of guidance has arrived to find his walnut desk chained, locked, and adorned with a bright orange bow—although enough room was left for him to reach the Snickers bars in his top drawer.

A teacher has had his classroom rigged to appear as though the ceiling above him is leaking. Another is greeted by cascading balloons and confetti showering him as he opens his door. The students have begun to filter in.

Pop, Pop, Pop! No, it's not the sound of gunfire. It's the sound of "Confetti Poppers" going off in the lockers. Other students are welcomed by meticulously placed notebooks that make all the contents of their lockers spill to their feet.

One young lady finds a Styrofoam cup filled with marigolds in front of her locker to cheer her up after a bad yesterday. Happy Birthday wishes are in a locker or two.

The principal has since arrived, only to find that her walking shoes have been filled with crushed crackers. A secretary who had unwittingly walked across a newly waxed floor finds tiny cut-out footprints across her typewriter, desk, phone, and computer.

Oh, the advantages of staying late into the night when there's no one else around.

This isn't the average day at Kingswood, but it's pretty close. The most enjoyable part for me is knowing that I'm home sleeping while my presence is being felt.

Sometimes, after a particularly well-placed welcome has been set, I find it hard to get to sleep because I'm thinking about how people will react and laughing too hard.

Isolation's No Problem

I know that some education support employees find themselves feeling isolated or not part of their school's mainstream. I've been fortunate at my school

to be included in two key activities that have involved me above and beyond the daily routine.

First and foremost is my participation in *The Knight Report*, Kingswood's monthly student newspaper. My column, the "Custodial Corner," is a tongue-in-cheek look at Kingswood High. But it also applauds the students for their accomplishments—be they state championships, good grades, or just a good effort.

The column is very difficult to write. It takes me between 20 and 30 hours a month to do it justice. Over the course of the year I try to mention every student—in a high school of approximately 700—at least once. And while I work hard to make the column amusing, I also take great pains to make sure I know whom I can joke with.

Second, I'm deeply involved in school and community efforts to keep students drug- and alcohol-free. I sit on the school district and community Drug and Alcohol Awareness Task Force and the steering committee for the 1994 Drug-Free School Grant.

Both Peter Yates and I are also qualified facilitators for the "Challenge Course," an early intervention drug and alcohol abuse program offered by the New Hampshire Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention.

I believe it's realistic to challenge students to stay free of drugs and alcohol through their high school years. After that, they'll be making decisions as adults. Without a teenage problem with drugs and alcohol to burden them, chances are they won't have this dependency later in life.

'I Love My Job'

We at Kingswood are like a very large family. My role in this family is that of the oldest brother—someone the kids can go to at any time. Someone who remembers what it was like to be a clumsy 16-year-old. Someone who has already tested the waters they're trying to tread.

Someone who won't pass judgment or make fun of their adolescence or shortcomings.

Someone who won't go along with their decisions or opinions matter-of-factly, but will accept their particular feelings as an individual and try to help direct them from there.

I'm a small part of an intricate system, and it helps everyone involved if I do my job to the best of my ability. Fortunately, I love my job. A finer position could not have been created for me.

As a custodian, I have more respect and attention than it has ever been my pleasure to accept. The admiration and respect the students have for me is equally matched by the admiration and respect I have for them.

My past experiences have shown me that I can laugh at myself and not expect perfection at every turn. And that's a lesson I try to pass on to young people.

To persuade them, I draw on examples from my illustrious past: I had the principal's sailboat towed away by mistake because Peter and I thought that somebody was playing a joke on us.

Once I accidentally locked a student in the boy's lavatory. Another time I whoopi cushioned the wrong school board member...mistakes happen.

In short, I really enjoy telling jokes, playing jokes, and having a good laugh. I have the distinct opportunity to do it every day with some of the nicest high school kids that you could ever imagine.

That's no fluff!

I don't know if the way that I relate to the students of Kingswood would be effective at other

schools. But I do know that what I do works here.

Everyday someone new comes into focus. I can't help but care.

I always end the "Custodial Corner" with the phrase, "If you ever come across a person who doesn't have a smile, give 'em one of yours."

So the next time you're walking down the halls of your school and you see someone who needs a smile, offer your hand and just ask how they are. You'll be surprised at the results.

'Custodial Corner'



Bob Rivera is a student adviser, school newspaper columnist, prankster, and teacher of life's lessons. But his job description at New Hampshire's Kingswood Regional High School reads "custodian."

Peter Cervelli



People

This Fish Story Is a Hit

With the tobacco industry in jeopardy, North Carolina farmers are looking for new ways to make a living. Enter **David Mooring** (inset) and **Joel Hoyle** (right), both agriculture education teachers at North Lenoir High School in LaGrange.

Mooring and Hoyle think fish may be the answer. So they created an aquaculture program—to raise fish for profit—at their school.

In aquaculture, fish can be raised in ponds, cages in ponds, and closed tanks similar to aquariums. Through experimentation with the different systems, Mooring and Hoyle hope that they and their students will find the most productive method suited for converted farm land.

The program has thrived on local support, including a foundation grant, permission to use private ponds and property, the building of a dock by an electric company, volunteer fish feeders, and donated funds and equipment. The district bought the fish and the feed, and high school engineering students built the pond cages.

Last year the kids raised 300 catfish, 250 rainbow trout, 250 tilapia, and 200 hybrid bluegills—learning lots of chemistry and math in the process. Some of the fish were sold to markets, others stocked nearby ponds. The students hope to export the tilapia out of the country.

Mooring and Hoyle recently expanded the program with the help of a \$30,000 North Carolina Rural Economic Development grant. They hope it will eventually be self-supporting.

"Aquaculture is a growing industry," says Mooring. "It's relatively easy to raise fish and, now that people are more health conscious, there's a growing market for them."



A Friend at the Top

As Florida's new interim commissioner of education, NEA member **Douglas "Tim" Jamerson** is tackling two major challenges facing teachers today: loss of prestige and low pay.

"Society doesn't support teachers the way it should, and parents aren't as involved as they should be," says Jamerson, a member of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association, who taught for 10 years at St. Petersburg High. What's more, "Good people want to enter teaching but can't, because economically it's not possible."

As a state legislator since 1988, Jamerson led the campaign for the school reform law now known as Blueprint 2000. Part of the package deals with giving local communities more control over their schools. Jamerson continues to pursue this goal, as well as getting parents and business more committed to education.

Jamerson got into politics a decade ago on the advice—and with the strong support—of his students, who still keep in touch. "They stop by my home—architects, lawyers," he notes proudly, "pulling up in their sports cars alongside my old pickup truck."

Jamerson faces a November election to retain his office, and NEA's Florida state affiliate, FTP-NEA, is giving him its all-out support.



Taking Charge at Fort Dodge

It's no longer politics as usual in Fort Dodge, Iowa—not when two of the seven members of the City Council are school employees and Association activists.

Jane Burleson, a teacher associate at Fort Dodge Senior High, has been on the council for 11 years. **Ron Campbell**, a custodian at Iowa Central Community College and president of his local Association, was elected in 1992.

Located 100 miles north of Des Moines, Fort Dodge has a population of 26,000, a \$23 million budget, and the usual range of problems, from sewers to garbage collection to tight money.

On issues of community, kids, or unions, Campbell and Burleson stick together and get things done. "Last year we backed one another and voted for the recreation budget," Campbell says, "and it passed."



Tim Hynds

"I grew up in Fort Dodge," Campbell notes. "I know most of the people here, and I take care of their problems the same day they call me."

"Citizens have a chance to voice their opinions to me," Burleson notes with equivalent pride. "And I can get something done a little quicker than the big boys."

Lockett's Risk

Five years ago, East Orange, New Jersey teacher **Hazel Lockett** took a big risk. She decided to scrap her old ways of teaching grammar and other lessons in favor of having students write . . . every day.

"I'd been in such a rut," says Lockett. "At 10 o'clock every day, I was teaching grammar and usage without any context." Then, at the Andover Breadloaf Writing Workshop in Vermont, Lockett took part in Nancie Atwell's program to teach writing.

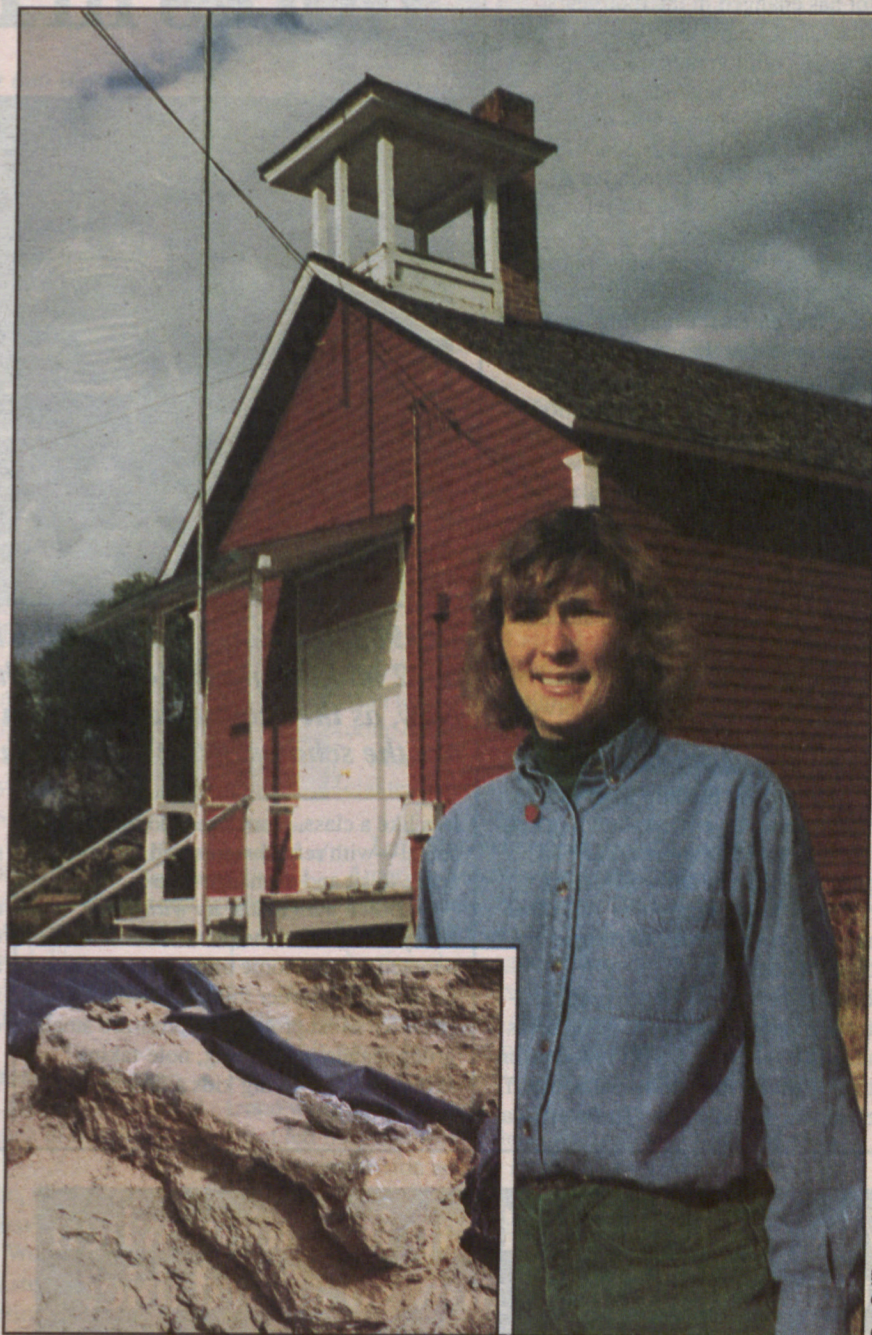
Lockett knew Atwell's program had proved hugely successful in teaching suburban kids to write. Lockett's dilemma: Would that approach also work for her urban African American kids?

The answer's in: Her students posted a 100 percent increase in writing performance on a statewide test. Lockett, who was named a 1994 Christa McAuliffe Educator by NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, also gained the courage of her convictions.

"I've just gotten permission to buy a modem that will link our school with a school in Mississippi—and maybe someday South Africa."



New Jersey Newsphotos



Ron Shiffin

Dinos Go To 'Little Red School'

Now that children no longer come to Shell, Wyoming's century-old one-room Red School—it closed in 1991—the community has decided instead to enroll dinosaurs, or as much of them as can be found.

"Big Horn County has been the scene of dinosaur excavations since the 1930s," explains **Lisa Anderson**, an Association member who attended the Red School in grades 1-5. She still lives in Shell and teaches in nearby Worland.

"Recently, two things came together," Anderson continues. "A Swiss expedition—the one that discovered 'Big Al,' the allosaurus nearby—was looking for a way to give something back to the community. And the community was looking for a use for the Red School, something that would be dignified and

also promote the area."

Contacts between the two led to the idea of a paleontology museum that would appeal to both local kids as well as those on their way with their families to Yellowstone Park.

The Swiss group drew up the plans for redesigning the building and offered to provide bones and casts. A local group, Historic Red Shell School, Inc., was formed to obtain rights to the property the school is on and to seek funding. Lisa Anderson became one of its active members.

The real estate transactions continue. In the meantime, Red School group members think they may have identified the museum's first display item—a 2 1/2-foot sauropod forearm excavated by a Smithsonian expedition last summer.

RESEARCH CLUES

They were schools at the crossroads—12 urban junior high and middle schools in Oakland, Baltimore, Milwaukee, San Diego, and Louisville. The schools seemed trapped—just as their students often feel going through the awkward years of early adolescence.

A lot has changed in the four years since the Clark Foundation began spending up to \$12 million on these 12 schools over six years. Where are they now?

Author Anne C. Lewis tells us in *Changing the Odds, Middle School Reform, 1991-1993*, the second in a series of reports following the reform efforts.

Told through black and white photos, and interviews with administrators, teachers, and parents, *Changing the Odds* makes the case that these schools—and possibly many others like them—can succeed if given the right combination of resources—money, yes, but much, much more.

Signs of success in the making include improved attendance, more active learning, higher teacher morale, improved student performance, and a belief held by more and more teachers that all students can perform at high levels.

What kinds of strategies are the schools in the Clark Foundation network trying? The highlights:

➤ **A heavy emphasis on staff development.** Much of the funding from the Clark Foundation went into building new staff development programs. The San Diego school district allowed faculty from the two Clark schools to visit other schools for one day, with substitutes paid for by the Foundation.

Then the district gave each participating teacher another day to develop ideas stimulated by the visits. This initial effort led to a district-wide middle school staff development day last year. The event was

12 Junior Highs: Works in Progress



In 1989, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation gave grants to 12 middle and junior high schools in five urban areas. Now, as they complete their fifth year of a six-year effort, are the schools better off than they were before?

less like a class, more like a community social—with refreshments and lots of space to sit and exchange ideas.

➤ **Down with drills, up with skills.** Many of the Clark network schools adopted at least some of the principles behind higher order thinking skills (HOTS). Most projects emphasized small group, hands-on learning, note-taking skills, and just giving kids a little more time to think.

The point: learning these skills will make you a better student in any subject.

➤ **A new strategy for assessing student performance.** Although all 12 of the Clark schools lacked the ability to collect and analyze data about student progress five years ago, now all have a better handle on this area.

The Clark Foundation brought in assessment experts who shared their findings with local staff through written

reports and personal visits. Schools received assessment summaries that they used to conduct their own internal evaluations; from these, they drew up a list of priorities.

➤ **Increased parent involvement.**

Principals, teachers, and other staff all lamented the lack of parent participation in their kids' educations. In the last five years, most of the 12 schools have made progress in this area.

Their methods vary. Two Baltimore schools in the Clark network use Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS), developed by researchers at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Essentially TIPS offers a collection of more than 200 homework assignments that require adult help.

Another idea, developed by Kosciuszko Middle School in Milwaukee, has school staff going door-to-door, inviting themselves into students' homes to talk to parents—not about bake sales, but about how to improve their kids' academic achievement.

➤ **Consistent, progressive leadership from administrators and teachers.**

Creating positive leadership models has proved very difficult for all 12 of the schools. Since 1989, 25 principals have headed the 12 schools.

Still, through extensive use of outside consultants and special training programs, leadership has improved in all of the 12 Clark schools.

This is the fifth year of the six-year Clark Foundation grants, but clearly it's just the beginning of long-term reform for these 12 schools. Where will they be at the end of the next five years?

For more information, call 212/551-9100 or contact the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, 250 Park Ave., New York, NY 10177-0026.

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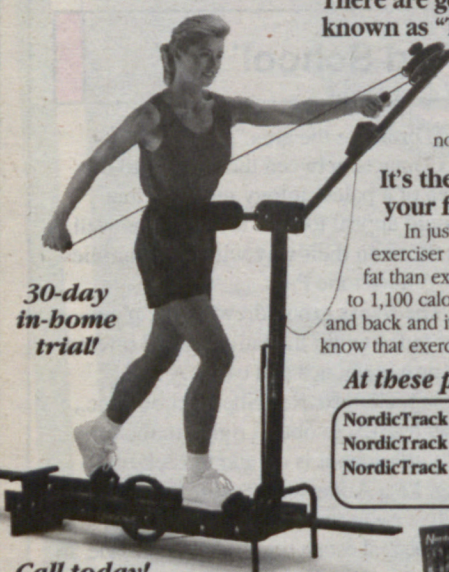
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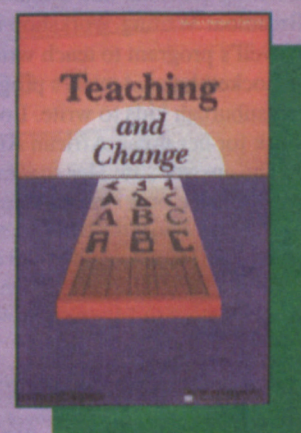
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INTERNATIONAL

RIGHTS WATCH

Children's Rights

Childhood is the foundation of life, a special time worthy of special attention and protection. While abuse of anyone's human rights is unacceptable, it is reprehensible to fail to recognize or assure the rights of the world's most vulnerable—its children.

International monitoring organizations and agencies of the United Nations regularly chronicle recent human rights abuses of the youngest among us. The sad story:

► Of the world's 46 million refugees and displaced persons, three-fourths are women and children.

► There are an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 child prostitutes in India.

► Rebel forces in Liberia have conscripted more than 6,000 child soldiers.

► In 1992 (most recent figures), 1,529 children were murdered in Colombia.

► Child labor continues to deprive minors of a childhood in many parts of the world. In Cote d'Ivoire, for example, some children begin working in gold and diamond mines as early as three years old, the average age of child laborers being seven.

► In a six-month period last year, 328 children were killed by death squads in the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

► Fourteen hundred children are homeless on the streets of Bucharest, Hungary.

► Bonded labor is a modern form of slavery throughout South Asia where families, including small children, are forced to repay generations of debt. Eight million children are reported to be bonded in Pakistan.

► In the last two years, cases alleging torture of children have been filed against 19 countries.

A respected and protected child has a possibility of becoming a respected and empowered adult. A violated child may be lost forever.

Classroom Resources

► An International Year of the Family resource kit is available to schools from Department of Public Information, Room S-1040, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, 212/963-1453, FAX 212/963-4556.

► For information on the official IYF theme song, "The Family," contact Families in Focus, 800/752-6100. Available in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, and Arabic.

► A new UNESCO book, *Families: Celebration and Hope in a World of Change*, commemorates IYF and may be ordered from UNIPUB (Item # U2873) for \$30. Call 800/274-4888.

A Meeting of Hearts and Minds

It's not unusual: educators from one nation meeting educators from another. Yet every visit seems to advance the cause of international understanding just a little more.

Illinois Education Association President Bob Haisman wrote this article after he returned from a 1992 visit with teachers in the Baltic states.

The town of Jelgava is 100 kilometers outside of Riga, the capital of the now independent Republic of Latvia. The school is in a rural district, where they grow wheat, sugar beets, and cucumbers on farms that were until recently collective and just now are being transferred to individual owners.

Along with 25 other educators and our tour leaders, we traveled the 100 kilometers to the Zaleniecki School. Paved roads gave way to gravel roads, and, finally, just past the town of Jelgava's grain elevator, we came to a dilapidated bridge over which the wizened, crotchety—and very smart—bus driver refused to cross with his 12-ton bus.

Bone tired, travel-weary, hungry, and dehydrated, we had to decide whether to get out of the bus and walk two kilometers to the Zaleniecki School or return to Riga.

We voted to walk to the school, tired and sore of feet, some of us grumbling. But we couldn't bring ourselves to disappoint the teachers who had turned out in the middle of their summer holiday to meet with us. It was the best decision any of us made during the trip.

For at the end of our two-kilometer trek—a beautiful walk through sunny Latvian farm country—we met Marita Neverovska. Marita has been the English teacher for 23 years at the Zaleniecki School. She and her 14 Latvian colleagues, dressed in their Sunday best, had been waiting all afternoon for our arrival.

As we entered the immaculately maintained 110-year-old, four-story brick school house, a little eight-year-old boy dressed in Latvian folk costume greeted each of us with a small bouquet of flowers.

Marita addressed us once we were inside, thanking us for coming. She explained that we were the first foreigners to come to their village or their school since World War II.

She showed us the classrooms and their students' artwork, poetry, and textbooks. She told us in sometimes halting English of their problems: no modern textbooks, no audio-visuals, maps only in Russian, parents too busy working three jobs to feed their families.

She told us that the teachers at Zaleniecki made 2,000 Latvian rubles a month (\$12) and that a person needed six times that much to live.



United States teachers pose with their hosts in Copenhagen.



A Latvian student offers a bouquet of flowers to United States teachers.

She said they were worried about the coming winter and whether they would have enough food, enough coal to heat the school, or enough petrol for the buses to bring the children to school. They were worried about the Russian soldiers who refused to leave the bases just outside their village.

Yet she told us they were optimistic about their future now that Latvia was free. She explained to us that teachers in Latvia have a special role in making sure that their country retains its freedom, that Latvian teachers have to prepare their students for freedom, democracy, and a better future.

Many of us cried. We were moved by those special teachers, by Marita's indomitable optimism.

Latvian teachers welcomed American teachers. American teachers gave gifts—pens, stickers, maps, books, and money. The Latvian teachers gave us tea, honey and black rye bread, currants, huckleberries, champagne, and much more.

They taught us all a lesson about doing a lot with a little, about the special mission of teachers worldwide, about helping kids, about hope and peace. We American teachers sang "This Land is Your Land"—and we laughed and we danced and we cried some more.

I left the Zaleniecki School with renewed hope and respect for my profession and for all teachers worldwide. What special people teachers are. Special people like Marita Neverovska teach in country and city schools around the world for salaries similar to 2,000 rubles a month. They do it to prepare students for a brighter future, and they do it because of their irrepressible spirit.

The visit Bob Haisman describes was arranged through *Global Dialogues, 1994*, which NEA supports. For information about this year's visit to Scandinavia, the Baltics, and Central Europe, which will take place July 8 through 25, contact Sylvia Seidel at NEA Center, 202/822-7906.

Celebrating the Year of the Family

The official International Year of the Family (IYF) emblem is a heart sheltered by a roof, the two linked together with another heart symbolizing life and love in a home.

The UN General Assembly designated 1994 as the International Year of the Family to focus attention on the concerns and responsibilities of the family. The motto, "Building the smallest democracy at the heart of society," emphasizes the importance of the family unit as a cornerstone of all human relations. Families manifest themselves in widely different forms and functions. Promoting an accurate understanding of families among governments, policy makers, and the public is one of the Year's objectives.

With the theme "Family: Resources and Responsibilities in



a Changing World," the Year of the Family aims to:

- Increase awareness of family issues.
- Strengthen national institutions that support the family.
- Stimulate efforts to address family-related problems and solutions.
- Enhance the effectiveness of family programs.

► Improve cooperation among national and international non-governmental organizations.

► Build upon ongoing activities benefiting women, children, youth, and aging and disabled persons.

Specific activities and observances are encouraged at the local, regional, and national levels. For more information, see the *Classroom Resources* box at left.

TRENDS

Putting a Spin on Art

Can't get the kids to the art gallery? Now you can bring the art gallery to the kids. On computer disk.

Microsoft recently released *Microsoft Art Gallery: The Collection of the National Gallery, London*, a new addition to the CD-ROM genre that sells for \$80. Okay, it's not the real thing—but, in some ways, it's better.

This particular disk allows users to construct a personal study agenda, search for genres of paintings, read all about painters and their work, provide guided tours, even see—through animation—how a painting is composed.

These features can be very appealing to adults and kids alike. "Treat the CD-ROM as akin to an arcade game with numerous exciting levels to explore," writes one reviewer. "And the only alien to zap is art itself."

Is Fitness Fun?

Depends on who you ask. While more than half of students surveyed recently believe fitness is an important part of physical education, three-quarters say they've had negative experiences while participating in fitness activities.

Deborah Tannehill, one of two Ohio State University researchers responsible for the survey, says kids' bad feelings

come from a variety of sources. Some don't like the activities, some find them tedious or hard, and some just don't like doing them in front of kids of the opposite sex.

Tannehill draws two major conclusions from the study. First: "A lot of times, fitness isn't presented in ways that are fun for kids."

Second: "Kids like learning how to play games and play sports. We just failed to show them they play better if they're in better shape."

Barrier-Breaking

The traditional wall between K-12 teachers and education school faculty may be crumbling.

The evidence: nearly half of education schools surveyed recently said they have established partnerships with K-12 schools, and 60 percent say teachers have formal appointments at their schools.

In releasing the survey of its members, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education called the rising number of partnerships "encouraging." By joining forces, K-12 teachers and education faculty can collaborate on research and new teacher training, faculty members can stay grounded in classroom reality, and teachers can share the lessons of experience.

But can faculty members help teachers

with reform? Yes and no. A majority of methods professors surveyed said they were "extremely able" to help establish integrative learning and cooperative learning groups.

But large percentages of faculty members said they were only "marginally able" to help teachers with site-based decision making, outcome-based education, and technology-based learning.

What Makes a Scientist?

Former *New York Times* education reporter Joseph Berger answers the question in a new book that analyzes the backgrounds and success of many previous winners of Westinghouse Science Talent Search awards.

Key ingredients: an early start at a special science high school, hands-on research projects, a mentor in a real laboratory, time, and "impassioned diligence."

In *The Young Scientists* (Addison-Wesley, \$21.95), Berger says it also helps to come from New York, be a member of an immigrant family struggling to succeed in America, and have parents who value and encourage curiosity, autonomy, initiative, and hard work.

His conclusion: scientists aren't born, they're made—and Americans can and should provide opportunities and resources to make more of them.

Exit Carpooling

Enter Kids Xpress, Kids Taxi, and Kids Around Town—just a few of the new van services for working parents who want to get their kids from one place to another after school.

These services—springing up all over the country—are often cheaper than taxis. In promotional materials, services say they provide carefully screened drivers equipped with cellular phones, and drive kids in vans with the latest safety equipment.

"We make it possible for some students to take part in after-school sports and activities," says Barbara Ruprecht, a working mom who started Kids Around Town in St. Paul, Minnesota. "With their parents' schedules, they would never be able to participate otherwise."

Bell To Keep Promise

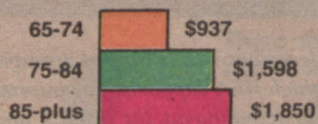
Although the merger of Bell Atlantic and Tele-Communications, Inc. was recently called off, Bell Atlantic officials say the company will follow through on an earlier promise to link 26,000 public schools to its national communications network.

Bell officials say schools will be hooked to its network and won't be charged for basic services. Bell also promises some educational programming and access to the Internet, which has some 20 million users.

DATA BANK

Another Reason For Reform

The out-of-pocket costs for home health care for the elderly will rise dramatically in the future. Here's what people in three age groups will spend annually in the year 2030 if there's no health care reform.



Source: AARP

By the Numbers

People who have immigrated to the United States in recent years have the following average incomes:

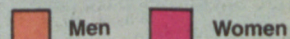


Source: U.S. News & World Report, U.S. Census Bureau

Dollar Digest

What are the relationships between income and education? Between income and gender? See below:

Median weekly earnings of full-time workers, 25 and older



High school grad, no college



Bachelor's degree



Professional/doctoral degree

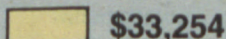


Average net worth of households headed by a person with:

Four years of college



High school diploma

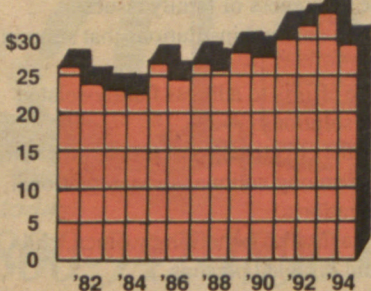


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics; 1992, in *USA Today*.

Ed Grows, but Funding Slows

The Department of Education continues to add programs, but its budget grows just slightly each year, and the number of Ed Department workers shrinks. Below: how the Department of Education budget and programs have grown and the staff's declined over the last dozen years.

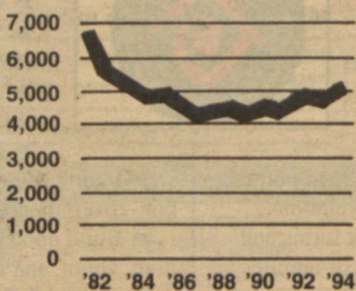
In billions



Fiscal Years

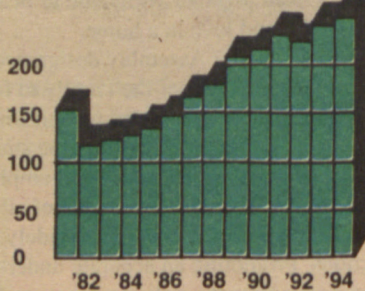
Source: U.S. Department of Education, *New York Times*

Number of employees



Fiscal Years

Number of programs



Fiscal Years

LOOKING AHEAD TO RETIREMENT

Parenting Your Parents

Somewhere between raising children and retiring, you may find yourself caring for an aging parent or relative.



You've emptied the nest, only to discover that your aging, widowed mother can no longer live alone or care for herself. Refusing to put her in a nursing home, you move her in with you and become her full-time caregiver, tending to her needs and often neglecting your own.

You're exhausted, you seldom leave the house, and your budget is strained, but you wouldn't have it any other way. After all, your mother devoted most of her life to caring for you—now it's your turn to care for her.

Your situation is hardly unique these days. One of every four adult Americans will end up caring for an aging parent or relative.

There are myriad scenarios: "children" in their 60s caring for parents in their 80s; spouses spending their golden years attending ailing mates; empty-nesters who'd paid the last tuition bill, only to have an aging parent move in.

And then there's the "sandwich generation"—midlife Americans juggling mul-

tiple responsibilities for children, jobs, and aging parents—or worrying about the day when they'll have to.

Today, more than six million Americans need help with such basics as bathing and getting in and out of bed. Millions more need help managing meals, money, and transportation. Most are cared for at home by family members.

While an increasing number of men are assuming caregiving responsibilities, three-fourths of all caregivers are women. Nearly half of those women work outside the home, and about 40 percent are still raising children of their own. More than a third of all caregivers are over age 65 themselves.

The demand for eldercare has risen dramatically over the past decade, mainly because of numbers: more older people, living longer. Also, hospitals are discharging patients quicker and sicker, and older patients often need someone to care for them in their own home.

The strains on caregivers can be over-

whelming. Unlike childcare, the responsibilities of eldercare often come suddenly—a parent suffers a stroke or breaks a hip and immediately goes from living independently to requiring 24-hour care.

"Many [caregivers] toil without respite, doing backbreaking labor in virtual isolation," writes Lou Glasse, former president of the Older Women's League (OWL)—a Washington, D.C. advocacy group—in a recent report to Congress on caregiving.

"They routinely struggle to cope with exhaustion, loneliness, brutal physical demands, and the heartbreak of watching a loved one grow weaker...and more dependent."

Reversing roles can be one of the most difficult aspects of caring for an elderly parent, notes Judith Donini Blackman, director of social services for the support group Children of Aging Parents (CAP).

"We get stuck in our old roles. The parent has always been the nurturer, but now it's the child's turn. It's a difficult

adjustment."

Financially, caregiving can be devastating. Medicare doesn't pay for long-term care. Medicaid will pay for nursing home care, and for home care in some states, but only after a patient has depleted personal assets nearly to the poverty level.

In the last decade, the strains on caregivers have begun to surface in the workplace. About 14 percent of caregivers have switched from full- to part-time jobs, and 12 percent have left the workplace entirely.

And the conflict could worsen. Sixty percent of the growth in the workforce over the next decade consists of women age 35 to 54, the group that's sandwiched between raising children and caring for aging parents.

Legislation that would create a system of providing and paying for long-term care is still a long way off. But last year, President Clinton and Congress took a step in the right direction with the Family and Medical Leave Act. The new law allows workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave because of the birth or adoption of a child, or the need to care for a seriously ill family member.

OWL recently initiated a project called First Line of Defense, aimed at getting information about caregiving into doctor's offices.

If you're caring for an elderly parent or relative, or you face the prospect, there are several things you can do.

First, enlist the support of other family members, advises CAP's Judith Blackman. "If a sibling lives a long distance away and can't participate in providing physical care, ask him to participate in other ways, like helping out financially," she says.

Second, find out what kinds of resources are available in your community. Start by contacting your local area agency on aging (look under "local government" in the phone book).

Respite care programs, for example, are designed to give caregivers time off. They can bring someone into your home for an afternoon or take your loved one to an adult day care center.

Other community services can include: home health services, Meals on Wheels programs, emergency response systems, and case management services (see box below left).

Finally, if you're looking for financial help, long-term care policies do exist. But beware: they're expensive and should be evaluated carefully.

Caregiver Support

The following organizations provide information, referrals, and support to caregivers of the elderly:

➤ **Eldercare Locator.** Sponsored by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, the Locator provides referrals to local and state agencies on aging. Call 800/677-1116.

➤ **Children of Aging Parents.** A nonprofit organization that provides information, counseling, and referrals to caregivers. Contact CAP, 1069 Woodbourne Rd., Suite 302-A, Levittown, PA 19057-1511, 215/945-6900.

➤ **Alzheimer's Association.** Provides information to caregivers of Alzheimer's patients. Local chapters are listed in the phone book or contact Alzheimer's Association, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1000, Chicago, IL 60611-1676, 800/272-3900.

➤ **Older Women's League.** Provides information and

referrals to caregivers. Contact OWL, 666 11th St., N.W., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001, 202/783-6686.

➤ **National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers.** The Association makes referrals to geriatric care managers who can assess patient needs and coordinate community services. For a list of care managers in your area, send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to NAPGCM, 655 N. Alvernon Way, Suite 108, Tucson, AZ 85711, or call 602/881-8008.

➤ **United Seniors Health Cooperative.** A nonprofit consumer organization that distributes information on health care and insurance.

For a copy of "Insurance To Pay for Long-Term Care," send \$1 to USHC, 1331 H St., N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005. Or call 202/393-6222.

Attention, Retirees And Preretirees

If you're a retiree or a preretiree who's not yet a member of NEA-Retired, contact your NEA state affiliate to learn how you can join.

A variety of member benefits are available to NEA-R members through NEA-Retired and NEA Member Benefits. For more information on NEA Member Benefit programs, call toll-free 800/637-4636.

BOOK BEAT

Sensible Science

Science activities—checked out by kids, parents, teachers, and scientists—will keep your students experimenting for months on end.

Science Is...

By Susan V. Bosak, with Douglas A. Bosak and Brian A. Puppa
Scholastic Canada. 2nd edition. 515 pp.
\$29.95.

Want to know how to make a hole in a piece of tablet paper big enough to step through? Or how to compare the "fright distance"—a measure of how close a human can get to a wild animal—of different species?

These are things you and your students can learn to do from the new edition of *Science Is...*. The book is designed to help kids ages 6-14 learn to think in a scientific, systematic way.

The 500-plus activities (one per page) use materials that are inexpensive and readily available—

plastic bags, magnifying glasses, drinking glasses, straws, rubber bands.

Short activities—"quickies"—as well as longer ones are organized into 10 subject areas and 40 topics. A table of contents set up as a subjects and topics grid gets them all onto a two-page spread.

Using the grid and the index laid out on the table of contents, you can find the paper-you-can-step-through and wild animal fright distance activities. You'll learn that the former is a matter of making cuts in the right places; the latter, of dropping a marker on the ground when the animal takes flight, then measuring how far that spot is from where the animal was.

The adults who set up the activities needn't be trained in science. Parents as well as teachers can initiate the experiments. The text and diagrams tell you all you need to know. The layout, including funny cartoons, make the pages very attractive. Extensive resource lists are also provided.

According to the book's introduction, The Communication Project of Ontario, Canada, which produced the revised *Science Is...*, is a family effort. Susan Bosak and Douglas Bosak are sister and brother, and Susan Bosak is married to Brian

Puppa—they met, the book says, at a high school science fair. The trio expanded an earlier version of the book after testing the activities with focus groups throughout North America.

They've surely come up with a winner. The coverage is broad; the contents, timeless. Plus the science is sound.

—Nancy R. Needham
Book Review Editor



► Order *Science Is...* from the National Science Teachers Association (10 percent discount to NSTA members), 800/722-NSTA; Scholastic, 800/325-6149 (item no. 74070); or Firefly Books (10 percent discount to schools), 800/387-5085.

The NEA Professional Library's Top Ten

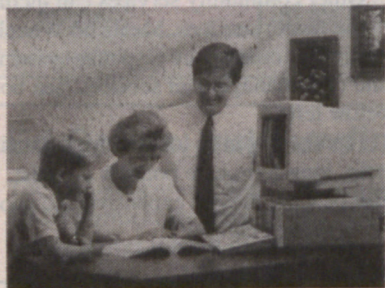
Current Rank

NEA Bestsellers

- 1** *Student Portfolios*, by Laura Grosvenor, et al. (\$9.95) Insights from your colleagues in the first of NEA's new Teacher-to-Teacher books. (#2901-1-00-FB) [Last month's rank: 1]
- 2** *NEA Federal Income Tax Guide for Education Employees - Tax Year 1993*, by John Arch. (\$8.95) The educator's guide to a less taxing April 15. (#2222-X-00-FB)
- 3** *At-Risk, Low Achieving Students in the Classroom*, by Judy Brown Lehr and Hazel Wiggins Harris. (\$9.95) No miracles, but this book covers more than 100 practical ideas for improvement. (#3338-8-00-FB) [3]
- 4** *Invitational Teaching, Learning, and Living*, by William Watson Purkey and Paula Helen Stanley. (\$10.95) A blueprint for what teachers can do in their classrooms to improve teaching, learning, and living. (#3049-4-00-FB) [8]
- 5** *Children of Promise: Literate Activity in Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Classrooms*, by Shirley Brice Heath and Leslie Mangiola. (\$8.95) A how-to look at a school-university collaboration on the cross-grade, multilingual, literacy learning frontier. (#1844-3-00-FB)
- 6** *Motivation and Teaching*, by Raymond J. Wlodkowski. (\$16.95) There are answers to the vexing problem of motivating your students. (#0751-4-00-FB)
- 7** *Countdown to the First Day of School*, by Leo Schell and Paul Burden. (\$4.95) A must-have checklist for new teachers. (#2150-9-00-FB) [7]
- 8** *Multicultural Education for the 21st Century*. Carlos Diaz, ed. (\$18.95) How to master the sophisticated, complicated, and demanding skills it takes to be a better teacher in the multicultural environment, now and in the future. (#1849-4-00-FB)
- 9** *Teaching Writing in the Content Areas: Middle School/Junior High*, by Stephen N. Tchudi and Margie C. Huerta. (\$8.95) This classic primer has adaptable model lessons that show just how easy it is to start content writing in your classroom. (#0777-8-00-FB)
- 10** *Creating Interactive Environments in the Secondary School*, by Lois Stover, Gloria Neubert, and James Lawlor. (\$16.95) Learn by doing as you transform your classroom into an interactive learning environment. (#3351-5-00-FB) [6]

Numbers in brackets indicate last month's rank, if any. All the resources listed above are published by and available from the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community. To order any book listed here or for more information, call 800/229-4200.

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Opportunities Abroad for

Teachers



Fulbright Teacher Exchange

Opportunities are available for college faculty, secondary and elementary school teachers who would like to exchange teaching positions with teachers in eastern or western Europe, Latin America, Africa, Canada, Russia and Ukraine. Elementary school positions are available in Canada and the U.K. To qualify you must be a U.S. citizen, have three years full-time teaching experience and be employed in a full-time academic position. Minorities are encouraged to apply. Application deadline is Oct. 15, 1994.

For more information and application material

Call (800) 726-0479 or write:

The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program, Attn: NT
600 Maryland Ave., S.W., Room 235
Washington, D.C. 20024

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Spring brings renewal in more ways than one. For many school employees, it's the beginning of "open enrollment" time—the period when you can examine your benefits package for the 1994-95 school year.

The opportunity's here: choose carefully, squeeze the most value out of the options available, and save money.

Because benefits packages change so often, you should reexamine your choices every year. "There's not an employee in the country who will not find one thing changed in his or her benefit package this year," says Christine Seltz, a partner in the Lincolnshire, Illinois office of Hewitt Associates, benefits consultants.

Usually the most complicated choice involves picking a good medical plan. About 90 percent of employers offer a choice in health care plans today. Employers have a common goal in offering choice: saving money.

They want you to give up traditional fee-for-service insurance coverage that allows you to go to any doctor you choose and be reimbursed for your medical care. They'd like you to choose instead a less expensive type of managed care with some limits on choice.

Your managed care options might include a health maintenance organization, or HMO, where you are required to use the doctors in the network. It might include a preferred provider organization, or PPO, where you get more generous benefits if you choose a network doctor.

Or it might include a new type of hybrid plan called an "open-ended HMO." These plans provide all the benefits of an HMO when you stay in the network: no deductible, no forms to file, and doctor's visits for as little as \$2. But they also allow you to go outside the network provided you're willing to pay 20 or 30 percent of the cost.

Consultants say it's no longer a question of whether you should consider a managed care plan but *when*. President Clinton's health care package would give a big push to managed care.

Employers are pushing hard for it, too, offering additional incentives to employees who make the move and adding additional charges for those who refuse to do so.

Initially, traditional insurance plans and managed care plans cost employees approximately the same in premium dollars. The savings came once you enrolled in the HMO, where you had few out-of-pocket medical costs.

But now employers are beginning to offer HMOs at lower premiums, too. "Up until last year, people with enough money would pay for free choice," says Howard Weizmann, a consultant in the Washington office of the Wyatt Co. "But now managed care is beginning to show a demonstrable difference in costs—for employers and employees. It's gotten to the point where everyone really should consider a managed care option."

Rosanna Milley, a consultant to Foster Higgins, benefits consultants based in Princeton, New Jersey, suggests that you plan in advance when to move to an

HMO. "Managed care is the future," she says. "You need to know the best point in time to make the move."

For example, if you're pregnant or if someone in your family is being treated for a serious illness, "now might not be the time to change," Milley says. When you're going through major life transitions or family trauma, you'll probably feel more comfortable going to doctors with whom you already have a relationship.

On the other hand, "if this is the year that you don't have a major medical treatment, it might be the best year to move," Milley says. If you plan to have a family in two or three years, you might want to move to an HMO and get established with doctors you like.

HMOs are much cheaper for young

families because they cover preventive care, including well-baby visits. In contrast, a traditional indemnity plan often pays nothing for routine checkups, mammograms, or regular visits to the pediatrician.

For most Americans, the biggest obstacle in switching to an HMO is the fear of changing doctors. Yet consultants say that your chance of finding a good doctor in an HMO is better than if you picked one on your own.

"Well-managed HMOs are much more methodical in checking licensing requirements and monitoring the care that is being given than the individual is," says Gino A. Nalli, consultant in the New York office of the Wyatt Co.

Before you join an HMO, call a doctor from the network's list to set up an inter-

view. You will want to see the office, find out how long you are kept waiting, how you are treated, and whether you feel confidence in the doctor. Some charge a fee for this visit, so ask about that when you call.

Here are some questions you might ask a doctor: What are your office hours? Are you available after hours? Which hospital do you use? Are you board certified? Where did you go to medical school? How long have you been practicing? How long have you been part of the HMO? How far in advance must I make an appointment?

If you have a working spouse, it usually doesn't make sense to pay premiums to both employers. Most employers have a provision called "nonduplication of benefits," which means that the second plan will not duplicate benefits you've received under the first plan. If the plans have the same coverage provisions, you would get nothing from the second plan.

To pick the best plan of the two, don't look just at cost. Look for the maximum annual out-of-pocket cost. Check the lifetime maximum. It should be at least \$1 million per person. There should not be an annual coverage limit. Check, too, for exclusions. Some plans limit maternity coverage, for example, or chemotherapy.

If you have access to a flexible spending account that allows you to pay for unreimbursed health care costs with pre-tax dollars, use it. Most consultants say that the Clinton health plan will eliminate these accounts, so you should take advantage of them while you can.

These accounts turn a portion of your taxable salary into a tax-exempt fund that can be tapped to reimburse you for out-of-pocket medical expenses such as drug and alcohol treatment, insulin, psychiatric care, orthopedic shoes, remedial reading, dental treatments, and health spas if prescribed by a doctor.

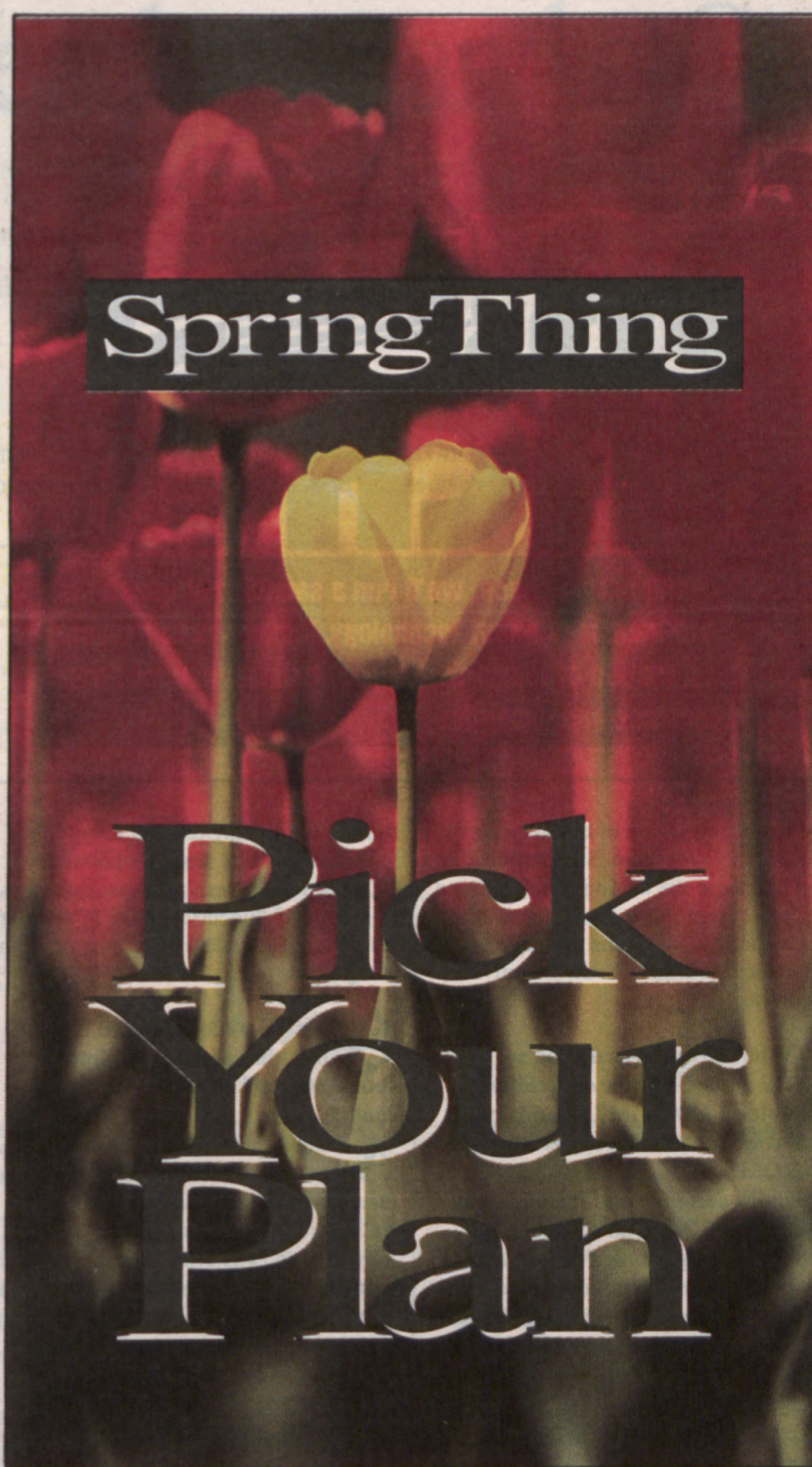
A nonmedical flexible spending account for dependent care may also be worth considering. It allows you to spend pre-tax dollars on babysitters, day care centers, day camps, and after-school activities for children under 13 or a disabled parent or spouse so that you can work.

If you are in the 40 percent bracket for federal and state taxes and you put the maximum of \$5,000 into a dependent care account, you would have \$5,000 for child care rather than the \$3,000 you would have if you paid tax on the money first.

Taxpayers who use the dependent care account are not entitled to use a separate tax credit for dependent care. Those taxpayers who earn \$24,000 or more are better off with the dependent care account, accountants say. Those who earn less, they say, do better with the tax credit.

Each year benefits packages grow more complex. But one message comes through from the consultants who work on these benefits: You must be an active participant in choosing your benefits and in squeezing the most out of the dollars you pay.

—Mary Rowland



Think carefully at "open enrollment" time. It could be the best opportunity you'll get all year to save money.

HAVE COMPUTER QUESTIONS?

Q What changes in electronic learning would you like to see take place in the next five years?

A Any changes that facilitate the involvement of teachers and students with electronic learning are welcome.

Educators need cost-effective equipment that adequately supports compatibility with similar technologies. For example, if you want to project images on a wide-screen monitor, you should be able to use the same adapter with the Macintosh and the IBM. The same goes for using a digitizer or CD-ROM.

Software programs could be more user-friendly, interactive, and flexible to address the needs of bilingual students. There are programs that translate different languages into English, but they aren't yet available in the classroom. With the growing number of immigrants in schools, this would be an asset for teaching and learning.

Educators also need software to design student performance assessments, whether they're open-ended, multiple choice, or performance-based. The software would allow students to use simulations and manipulate what's on the screen to illustrate what they know. The assessment would then be scored according to a built-in rubric.

Finally, the equity issue. It would be exciting to be able to have all students take home affordable powerbooks with a built-in modem, digitizer, and CD-ROM. Regardless of family income, students could then extend their learning beyond the school day.

Q Do you encourage the use of the spellcheck, grammarcheck, and thesaurus programs?

A Yes. Students should be equipped with resources to help them in their quest for knowledge. As students are encouraged to personalize their writing with the use of word processors, they



ASK DR. HACKER

Each month in this space, we'll run a sampling of questions from NEA members about technology. Our aim is to present a cross section of topics that reflect members' wide range of experience and expertise.

need to become aware of the software tools available for them. Students need to learn that there are writing standards, and that correct spelling is one of them. It's too bad that the programs available to elementary students are still primitive and limited.

Q What advantages do you see in the new electronic encyclopedias available on CD-ROM? Do kids really learn research and library skills using CD-ROM?

A Quick access to information using the CD-ROM is an advantage in itself. Students get turned on because they're able to locate information quickly using the search and sort modes of this technology. To search any topic, though, students must have some research and library skills.

We'd like to see CD-ROM encyclopedia programs with built-in word processors so students can create reports online without having to waste time printing page after page of information before

starting the writing process.

Unless students work cooperatively, CD-ROM still doesn't address the needs of groups of students. I'd like to see more students able to access the same program at the same time.

Q If a school has a limited budget, what kind of media technology should its staff purchase for the classroom?

A Wouldn't it be great if every classroom had a teaching/learning station on a cart with the following equipment: VCR, wide-screen monitor, computer, laser disc and CD-ROM players, modems for telecommunications and for video capture, a telephone line, and peripherals like camcorders, still videos, a scanner, and a micro/macro video system?

With a limited budget, however, coordination within schools is necessary. Teachers can be trained to focus on a certain technology and work on equipment that can be shared throughout the day. Or the school can buy an array of technologies within its budget based on what teachers say they need to enhance and extend teaching and learning.

Dr. Hacker's suggestion? Select a micro/macro video system that's set up on a stand. This system costs less than \$2,000. With it, you can project words, images, and micro-organisms on a monitor and have a very interesting discussion. To record the images, you connect the cable to a VCR and monitor.

The tape can be taken home by students to share with their families, or students can become "guest lecturers" for other classes and share what they've learned.

Q Are there any uses for obsolete equipment—software or hardware?

A Even obsolete hardware can be used by someone in your school district. For one thing, parts of inoperable equip-

ment can be used as replacement parts for the surviving ones.

There are also ROPs (Regional Occupational Programs) in high schools that work on obsolete equipment. The students take the equipment apart and put it back together again to learn computer repair skills.

Obsolete software is another story; give it away to someone who can use it or recycle the diskettes.

Q How can you get teachers and other school personnel to use technology together?

A Educators can share their expertise with other school personnel by modeling lessons enhanced with technology to other classes. And there are lots of opportunities for teachers of different subjects to work with one another, combining, for example, writing and performing arts using video camcorders and computers.

In these days of budget cutbacks and teacher aide layoffs, it's important for teachers to team with remaining aides to use computers to help students in small group settings. Many problem-solving lessons can be taught more easily and effectively with certain computer programs.

Still another good use of technology is to create a data base to track orders and requests, say, for science materials. Once in place, the data base can be easily updated, and it's easy to use.

A final note: Administrators should allow staff members to take home computers and software during the summer, when they finally have the time to work with them. For staff development, the key is to start slowly and maintain a narrow focus on one technology until a comfort level is established.

Once educators start enjoying technology, they will expand their horizons.

NEA Online Update

NEA has prepared an action plan to help NEA rural members who must make a toll call to access NEA Online, the new electronic communications network.

The plan is a step-by-step guide to help these members fight for rate relief. It suggests:

- Contact Sprint (800/736-1130) and Tymnet (800/336-0149). These two companies handle the phone traffic for NEA Online and can tell you if any new nodes (local connecting points) have been added to your local calling area.

- Call your local telephone company; some may be willing to adjust tariffs and reduce the toll charge.

- Mount a local campaign with other members who want to subscribe to NEA Online but can't get it without a toll charge.

The complete action plan is available through NEA Online or by writing to NEA Online, Action Plan, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.



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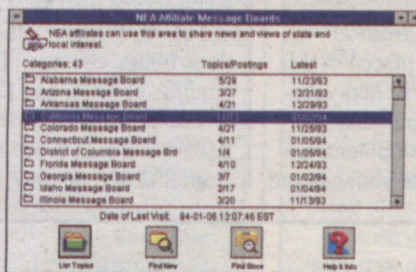
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NEA Online—available only on America Online—offers NEA members a place to meet and communicate with colleagues, whether they live down the street *or* across the nation. Best of all, use of the NEA Online area is free to NEA members.

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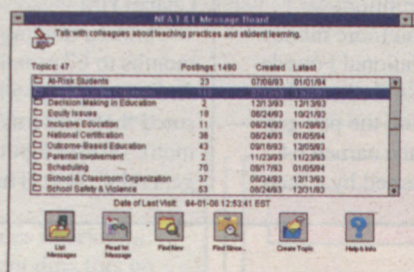
With just a couple of keystrokes you can accomplish so much. All you need is a computer and a modem; we'll send you free software and a free trial membership so you can begin exploring this fascinating world of information.

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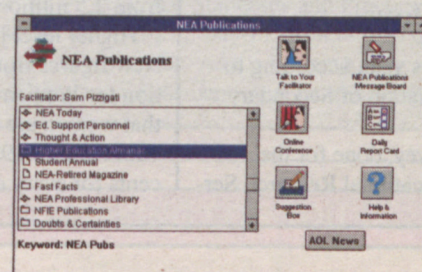
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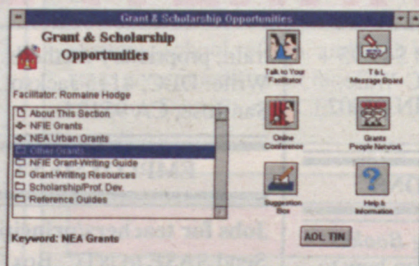
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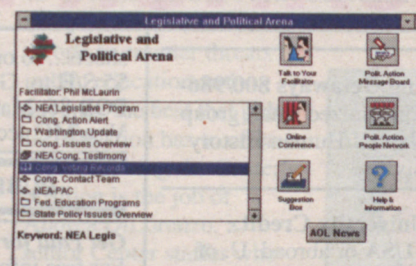
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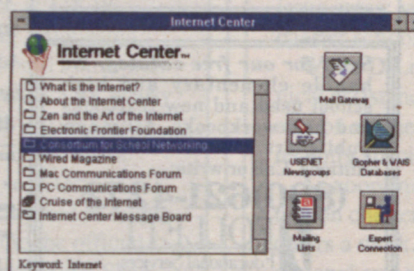
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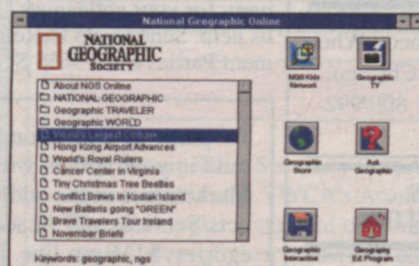
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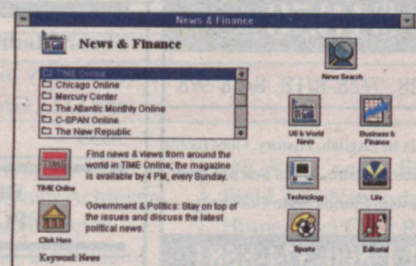
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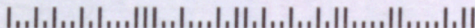
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TRENDS

More in Poverty

In 1993, the Census Bureau counted 39.6 million people living in poverty in the United States, 1.2 million more than were poor in 1992. That's the highest rate of poverty in this country since 1962.

But bare statistics don't tell the whole story. Since the U.S. population has grown, the percentage of Americans living in poverty is now 14.5 percent—considerably below the rate of 21 percent recorded in 1962.

Why the recent increase? Economists point to the nation's slow economic recovery, rising inequality in wages, and more households headed by single women.

Principal's Pay

It's up 3 percent this year, according to the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

The national survey, done for the NASSP by the Educational Research Ser-

vice, puts the average salary for high school principals at \$64,993; junior high and middle school principals at \$60,651; and elementary school principals at \$56,906.

A principal in Illinois made the most money this year, \$108,674; the lowest paid—\$34,000—was in Mississippi. More than 1,000 school districts were surveyed for the study.

Half Full?

Glass ceiling or no, women continue to move up the corporate ladder in impressive numbers. A recent issue of *Public Perspective* reports that the number of women in management positions more than doubled between 1978 and 1988 from 2.5 million to 5.6 million.

Higher level jobs mean more money. New figures from the National Foundation for Women Business Owners show that women are narrowing the pay gap with men. In 1980 women earned 64 cents for every dollar earned by a man;

in 1990, women's wages were up to 75 cents for every dollar men earned.

But there's still work to be done. A recent Gallup Poll reports that six out of 10 Americans claim society favors men over women, and an equal percentage argue that women don't have equal job opportunities.

Preschool Grouping

Children as young as two years old can profit from being in classes with older children, but by around four years of age, same-age groupings may be more beneficial.

So says a new study from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Children ranging in ages from 21 months to 67 months were placed in different groupings while researchers measured their patterns in communication, motor skills, cognitive development, and general growth. Those at the younger and

older extremes displayed different effects as a result of their groupings.

Youngest children in the mixed-age groupings typically outperformed peers in same-age classes. This trend "appeared to reverse at the oldest ages," the researchers noted in a recent issue of *Child Development*.

ACT Scores Up

Last year's high school seniors scored the first slight rise in results on the American College Testing (ACT) exam in five years. While students have scored an average of 20.6 every year since 1989, last year's seniors racked up an average 20.7 score.

A 20-year-high was recorded in 1973, when scores rose to 21.2.

The ACT exam, which runs about three hours, consists of tests in math, reading, science, and English.

The number of students taking the ACT exam was 875,000 in 1993, up from 832,000 in 1992.

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Your NEA

Q & A

Union Relations

What is NEA's relationship with other labor organizations?

NEA often works informally with unions on issues like health care, public employee rights, and education funding—both in Washington, D.C. and in state capitals nationwide. But NEA is not a member of labor's umbrella organization, the AFL-CIO.

Will that change?

That depends on NEA members. In 1991, the NEA Board of Directors established a special Committee on Relationships with Other Organizations. Committee members conducted a survey to obtain current data on member, leader, and staff attitudes toward the labor movement, the AFL-CIO, and the possibility of a single national organization for education employees.

What did the committee recommend?

After two years of studying NEA's relationships with other organizations, the special committee recommended to the Board of Directors that NEA "invite AFT and/or other labor organizations to enter into discussions with NEA regarding the possible establishment of a unified organization."

The NEA Board then recommended to the 9,000 delegates to the 1993 Representative Assembly last July that they approve such talks, which they did.

Delegates also directed President Geiger to report any progress to state and local affiliates on a regular basis and bring any and all proposals back to the 1994 Representative Assembly for full discussion and vote.

Have talks started?

Yes. NEA President Geiger and an appointed negotiating team began meeting with a team from the American Federation of Teachers last fall. So far, eight meetings have taken place.

NEA's position is that any unified organization must have democratic decision-making procedures, guarantee minority group participation, be free to take positions in the best interests of its members, and not require any NEA affiliate to affiliate with or make payments to the AFL-CIO.

What's the status of the talks?

At press time, the NEA negotiating team was meeting with AFT's team in Chicago. Team members and members of the Special Committee will meet to make recommendations to President Geiger who will forward them to the NEA Board and state affiliates by April 1. The Board will discuss in April.

SPEAKING OUT ON THE ISSUES

States Are Setting Assessment Agenda

To answer calls for higher standards and more accountability, more states are testing student progress—and the tests are playing an important role in fueling systemic school reform.

That's the gist of a new report issued by NEA and the Council for Educational Development and Research (CEDaR), an association of the nation's top education research centers.

The report, *Surveying the Landscape of State Educational Assessment Programs*, notes that the number of states that mandate student assessment jumped from 29 in 1980 to 46 in 1992.

"The state assessment landscape is filled with purposeful change," the report concludes, particularly as states move to bring curriculum and assessment "into better alignment."

The report includes interviews with state assessment directors on the relationships between assessment and reform in six states—California, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Texas, and Vermont.

"Assessment is a major lever for systemic school reform, and each state gives it a different face," explains Dena Stoner, CEDaR's

executive director.

Some states are developing totally new programs on what students should know and be able to do; others are revising their old instruments and raising standards for student performance. Some are mixing old and new testing strategies.

In all, 17 states are using performance assessments, and six are using portfolios as ways to gauge student learning. Some are using both.

"Sustaining this reform," notes Barbara Yentzer, director of NEA's Professional Standards and Practice, "will require teacher involvement, buy-in, professional development, and technical assistance. As the learning environment changes, teaching and assessment must be transformed to enhance it."

WORKING FOR YOU

Fighting Threats to Public Education

NEA created the Center for the Preservation of Public Education last year to centralize Association efforts to counter threats to public education and advance the best that public education has to offer.

Articulating the Center's position is the job of Andrea DiLorenzo, a senior Center staffer who serves as a political policy analyst.

Organizationally, the Center is divided into four issue areas: vouchers, privatization, charter schools, and the radical right.

While DiLorenzo has provided technical assistance to state and local affiliates on all the Center's topics, she's recently specialized on charter schools.

As coordinator of the Center's initiative on charter schools, DiLorenzo chairs a work group of some 20 national and state Association staff and Association leaders, who are working on a briefing book for state and local affiliates.

The Center's role is to help affiliates judge charter proposals and to work to implement charter schools that promote innovation in public schools and protect employee benefits. Currently eight states and Puerto Rico have state legislated charter schools.

DiLorenzo often travels to address state and local concerns about charter school legislation and its implementation. She's testified before state legislatures and written position papers, briefing papers, policy statements and articles.

DiLorenzo comes to the Center from NEA's government relations department, where she spent 11 years, most recently specializing in school choice, vouchers, and issues relating to education and the economy.

"I have a special interest," DiLorenzo says, "in ways public schools can promote and enhance our nation's democratic traditions and processes."



IN HISTORY

An important piece of educational history went up in smoke January 19 when a fire destroyed the house at 118 W. Wabasha in Winona, Minnesota.

That white clapboard house was NEA's original residence for nearly 20 years, beginning in 1902 when Dr. Irwin Shepard served as the Association's first secretary.

Shepard always worked at home, but his house became the official Association residence when Shepard built an addition—five rooms, hallways, and a separate entrance from the street. NEA's main office was on the first floor.

SHORT TAKES

Top Honor. NEA Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan has been named to the YWCA's Academy of Women Achievers. The academy is composed of women who have demonstrated, through their leadership and example, the value of women in business, the professions, and the arts. . . **Pre-RA Conference.** Building Capacity for Systemic Reform is the title of a meeting scheduled for June 30 at the Sheraton New Orleans. The conference will focus on the importance of a variety of professional development experiences for educators. Two general sessions are planned, including a panel discussion by educators who sit on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and the National Commission for the Accreditation of Teacher Education

(NCATE), and a discussion among members of the NBPTS Field Test Network. . . **Women's Leadership Training.** NEA Human and Civil Rights will offer "Campaigning to Win" training next fall and spring to 50 members interested in running for local, state, or national Association office. Topics covered include how to plan a campaign, manage time, use technology, raise money, and deliver speeches. The program is open to all NEA members except those who plan to announce a candidacy between Sept. 1, 1994 and August 31, 1995. Applications will be available through your state Association in mid-May. For more information, contact NEA staffers Gaye Barker (202/822-7732) or Betty Jeung (202/822-7736).

Letters



'APPALLED'

I was appalled by your February cover ("Public Education's Enemy #1") and believe that the *NEA Today* deserves a place in your "Heroes & Zeroes" column. Your cover was biased against women and biased against the elderly. Shame on you for not practicing what you preach.

Patricia Kelly
Denville, New Jersey

I find the dearth of articles for retirees a bit disturbing. I feel that if you don't include pertinent articles for us (I am a retiree) you will lose us, and that would be a waste.

I also found your February cover story headline a bit startling, but the story turned out to be enlightening.

Evelyn Klappholz
Breck, New Jersey

I am outraged by the February cover. You show a little old lady in her retirement, watering her plants and caption it "Public Education's Enemy #1?" Who do you think she is? Perhaps she's a retired teacher who worked much harder than today's teachers for much less than today's teachers can expect.

What a cheap shot. She might be someone's mother who was not employed outside the home and is living on the very small pension of her deceased husband. Maybe she's your great aunt who, with her husband, is getting by on just social security. Or could she be me, or you, after retirement in a few years.

To infer that older people are enemies of education because they're being taxed out of their homes is mean spirited and shows an enormous lack of understanding of the economics of growing older in a youthful society.

This type of journalism makes me ashamed to be an NEA member.

Emily York
Middleton, Wisconsin

GAY FAMILIES

While I tend to agree that first graders don't necessarily need to know about gay families (Debate, December), I find Judy

Park's characterization of gays as child molesters very disturbing. FBI statistics say that gay men are no more likely to molest children than heterosexual men. It seems to me that your editorial staff's job is to eliminate factual errors, especially when they denigrate a group of people.

Reid Walker
Denver, Colorado

Judy Park stated that consulting with "well-informed" physicians, health professionals, community leaders, business persons, and parents helped her determine that "there is no conclusive evidence that homosexual behavior is anything but a choice in lifestyles."

No doubt Park asked each of these "well-informed" individuals, "Do you recall just when it was that you made the decision to be either heterosexual or homosexual or something in between?"

Try this question on your friends. What you are likely to get back is a puzzled expression accompanied by another question: "What do you mean when did I choose? I didn't choose. I just am the way I am." That is precisely the point. Nobody chooses.

Unfortunately, teachers with Park's viewpoint come into contact daily with young people who have one characteristic that classifies them as "nothing less than repugnant," to quote Park.

How very sad. Kids are just kids. We must learn to accept them as they are—even the gay, lesbian, and bisexual ones—because it's a fact that a few of them always have been and always will be.

John Burns
San Jose, California

I must take exception to Judy Park's comments against teaching first graders about gay families. Three-quarters of her opinion was about sex and sex education. The issue here is not sex or behavior; it is about families, family structure and love.

People often read "homosexual" and "gay" as "homosexual sex" and "gay sex." No one asked if first graders should be taught about sex, only about families.

I feel as Mel Graham [the other debater] does that it's important to teach students about all family structures.

This includes kids living with their biological parents, with adoptive parents, with single parents, with grandparents, and with parents and their lovers—both male and female.

To exclude any family structure is to exclude the children in those families. Excluding those children will lower their self-esteem and their self-worth. Is this really what Park wants?

Regardless of how one feels about the behavior of adults, this should not translate into penalizing

and stigmatizing children.

Philip Katz
West Newton, Massachusetts

Judy Park states: "Acceptance of all people, tolerance of all religions, and respect for the values of all appears to be the thing to do." I would hope it's the thing to do!

Michael Chew
Stuttgart, Germany

In your December cover story, "Kids' Private Hell," you tell of the emotional hurt that children bring to school and laud the caring work of school personnel.

I was shocked and disappointed to find Judy Park's column in the same issue. You allowed her to respond to issues that had nothing to do with the question—cults, pedophilic lifestyles, and child abuse—and vent her own homophobia.

As a heterosexual professional educator, parent of four adult children, and grandparent of two, I believe public education has a responsibility to teach justice and equality. As the official newspaper of the NEA, I expect your journalism to reflect that also.

M.E. Nicholas
Vernon, Connecticut

I am a physical education teacher. I see first graders on a daily basis. I am also the mother of a first grader (and a fifth grader).

I agree with Judy Park. I applaud her for taking a conservative stand in a very liberal publication. First graders have enough to worry about, just getting through a long day. They have plenty of time in the years ahead to find out about homosexuality.

Adding "It's okay to be gay" curriculum to our school systems is a thinly veiled attempt by gay rights groups, to instill their beliefs about lifestyle choice. I think teaching tolerance is important, but teaching tolerance does not mean having to teach acceptance.

My heart goes out to children in this day and age. Parents and educators alike are afraid to stand up for what they believe is right and wrong. We have to quit sending mixed messages about sex, drugs, prejudice, and violence. Maybe self-control needs to start with us as adults, and as we begin to love ourselves and others again, we can influence young lives.

Self-esteem is vital to the mental health of first graders and everyone else. We will like ourselves and be better students, teachers, and people, when we are living lives we can be proud of.

Sandra Tolzda
Marietta, Ohio

I was anxious to receive the February issue to read responses to the shameful arguments made by Judy Park in the December debate.

I was delighted to find two letters

expressing disgust about the hate and bigotry Park expressed, because I feel she only expressed the homophobia many teachers also share.

I have been a witness to shocking comments in teachers' rooms and faculty meetings where teachers and administrators have shown the same ignorance and bigotry toward gay and lesbian people. There is a need to first educate the educator before one can educate our children.

Maybe the debate has begun that education.

Vincent Villareale
Hackensack, New Jersey

WATCH THOSE PICS

NEA Today is sending a dangerous message to teachers and counselors with the photos of a counselor touching a student

(December cover and again on page 5). Wake up to the '90s when charges of sexual abuse are rampant and many school districts have mandated "no touching."

Avoiding criminal charges and civil suits takes priority over a kid's need for an encouraging pat on the back or a supportive arm around his shoulder, even though he may desperately need both. Wise teachers and counselors keep hands off.

Evelyn Tanner
Kaysville, Utah

BAN THE BOARD

With all our talk about trying to stop violence in the schools, there's one place we can start. I'm talking about corporal punishment.

States that still allow this obscenity to exist, by law, are guilty of violence in one of its worst manifestations. Instead of teaching conflict resolution without violence, we teach these children that improper behavior can be combated with physical punishment.

What better place to start fighting violence in our schools? A campaign led by NEA would help greatly in ending this practice.

Betsy Newman
Fort Myers, Florida

COACH'S CORNER

Title IX brought equity to female students in school, and as a result the number of females involved in school sports more than quadrupled in the past 20 years. There were not enough female coaches. Men filled the void. Without them, it seems that many programs would not exist.

Rather than thanking men for assuming this responsibility and running successful programs, people like Nancy Plantz are upset, claiming that men now get all the jobs (Human Rights, February). What petty baloney!

First of all, why should it matter

who coaches a program so long as the program is well run? Second, Plantz gives no evidence that men are excluding women from job opportunities in coaching.

Third, Plantz is guilty of discrimination herself by recruiting coaches based on their gender. Her networking among female physical education teachers and their friends seems to discriminate and give preference in hiring to that group.

Finally, it might be time to send *NEA Today* writers and editors to a class where they could be "made more sensitive" to the needs of all people, not just minorities such as Blacks, women, gays, or lesbians. You need to develop a less skewed perspective about human rights, not just some humans' rights.

David O'Neill
Cockeysville, Maryland

SKINNY ON BEEF

Are you running out of people to feature in your "People" section? It seems to me that when we read daily that schoolkids eat an unhealthy diet of too much fat, to glorify a man who makes money (and receives government subsidies at our expense) promoting the consumption of beef in *NEA Today* is really scraping the bottom of the barrel (People, December). When we spend billions in this country trying to rectify the damage done by consumption of too much meat, to promote this man is ridiculous.

I think to be fair you should feature me next. Besides teaching Spanish in a magnet school for science and technology, I sponsor a club that promotes vegetarianism and animal welfare. We have cruelty-free barbecues and bake sales and try to educate people about the benefits of vegetarianism.

We believe that cattle raising is not only cruel, but damages the environment through destruction of grass and water resources. It's also the most inefficient way to nourish people—20 vegetarians can be fed on the diet that one beef cow consumes. How about a feature on my group?

Deanna R. Kuhn
Alexandria, Virginia

Call, Write, or...

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- By mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.
- By FAX: 202/822-7206
- By phone: 202/822-7207
- By NEA Online: Sign on to NEA Online and keyword to *NEA Today*. For information about subscribing to NEA Online, see page 30.

Debate



YES

Should States Mandate School Reform Standards?

Marge Carlson is a biology teacher at Greenfield Jr. High in El Cajon, California. She's co-chair of the Cajon Valley Education Association Political Action Committee and council representative to the California Teachers Association.

Hannah Jones is a seventh grade language arts teacher at Mahoney Middle School in South Portland, Maine. She's a member of Mahoney's school improvement team and the South Portland Teachers Association. Jones is in her second year of teaching.



NO

If we're going to be serious about achieving equity in education, we must advocate state-level education reform.

Case in point: California is a state known for diversity. From the fashionable mansions of Carmel and Beverly Hills to the inner-city neighborhoods of Watts and Oakland, the state is serving vastly different student populations.

And striking differences in property taxes create schools with graphically different resources for students.

In California, as in the rest of the country, the state department of education exists to make policies that bring consistency and standardization to the state's diverse localities. There is much to be standardized. Following are just a few areas where state reforms can help bring about equity among districts:

- *Equality of services to diverse populations.* The state can play a role in seeing that there are opportunities for bilingual, gifted, handicapped, Native American, adult, and vocational education students. Without these special programs, how can populations that require extra resources be expected to achieve at the same level as their less needy peers?

- *Standardization of student outcomes.* The state can provide minimum competency standards and expectations to begin to establish consistency in student outcomes. Without these standards, how can schools expect to achieve consistency in student learning?

- *Uniformity of class size.* Research shows that lower student-teacher ratios bring learning gains. Without a state minimum class size, how can financially strapped schools justify reducing class size? Reducing class size statewide is the only equitable way to improve learning for all students.

- *Standardization of safety codes and building maintenance.* Schools in districts that have high property taxes and bond revenues can afford to create aesthetically pleasing schools with first-rate facilities. Without standardized safety codes and maintenance guidelines, how can poor schools ensure their facilities

are safe and up to par?

- *Cost efficiency in purchases of education supplies.* When supplies and equipment are purchased in bulk, costs are significantly reduced. Without volume purchasing, how can poor districts afford the same supplies and equipment that wealthy schools get?

People argue that state departments of education tie up schools in red tape. In many states, that's changing. Thanks to progressive initiatives in several states, state-mandated charter schools are providing school site autonomy. Schools are being freed up from state regulations to provide outcome-based instruction with site-based decision making.

This goes to show that when reform is in the public interest, states are relaxing their hold on local schools. That's progress.

States are also in the best position to stop exploitative schemes like Chris Whittle's "Channel One" program. As you probably know, Whittle has been tempting schools with free video equipment—typically worth \$30,000 to \$50,000—in exchange for two minutes of advertising each day along with a 10-minute news show.

Most educators would agree that someone needs to put the brakes on this effort, which is grossing Whittle \$628,000 every school day. That's well over \$100 million a year.

The New York State Board of Regents has already moved to ban Channel One. Who is in a better position to stop this exploitation than states? Progressive leaders can make the state level the most effective venue for making these kinds of changes.

The key, then, is progressive state leadership. There's no doubt that putting forward-thinking educators in positions of leadership in state departments of education is crucial.

State mandates carry with them the force of law that affects thousands of people. In contrast, local mandates affect fewer people and establish inconsistent and inequitable outcomes across states.

With the advent of site-based management and an increase in teacher-driven school research and reform, teachers are slowly being handed the responsibility to create schools that mirror our knowledge about the best ways to teach.

To hand that power back to anyone—textbook publishers, business groups, or especially states—would be to lose professional ground. We'd also be abdicating our greatest responsibility: to create dynamic schools that respond to the needs of our students.

Sometimes it would seem almost comforting to let a state commission set reform guidelines so that we could focus entirely on working with kids. But the price we'd pay for such a compromise is too high. The moment teachers turn to outside sources for answers, we lose the flexibility to innovate.

For instance, there are veteran teachers who believe that basal readers are not the most effective method for teaching reading. Yet they continue to use basal readers in their classrooms because they are required to do so by outmoded curricular standards or, worse, because they've internalized feelings of disempowerment. Top-down, state-mandated standards would contribute to teacher passivity and disempowerment.

State mandates would not only lead to less effective schools, they would also set a terrible example for students, whom we ask to be self-directed learners.

Twenty years from now, classroom teachers would be struggling against their better judgment to meet standards that would be, at best, behind the times, and, at worst, badly conceived.

The only way to combat the struggle against mediocrity and obsolescence is to create school environments that promote teacher reflection, research, and reform.

Teachers need time and training to incorporate current research findings into our teaching. We also need resources to do research in our own classrooms. Finally, we need the power to refine our practice based on our professional development work.

For this work to happen, we must move away from externally imposed criteria and toward community-based goals for our students and ourselves.

State-mandated reform could be more than a distraction to teachers already involved in the process—it could be a curse. Creating a state agency or funneling more funds into the state department of education would feed a bureaucracy sure to divert tax monies away from local school reform movements.

Even a state agency with a high level of teacher participation cannot be trusted to set standards of reform for our schools. Such a group would no doubt include some of the most talented, committed reformers in the state, and their plans for reform might be outstanding.

But excellent standards are sure to fail without adequate school funding and without local participation in the process of their development.

Furthermore, there's no guarantee that legislators would appropriately support excellent standards. It's naive to think that a body charged with balancing the state budget and satisfying constituents is the best choice for developing a vision for successful schools.

Of course, teachers must be held accountable for educating students. We need to demonstrate to our communities that we're preparing children for the future. And, to some extent, we need to acknowledge the importance of standardized assessments, such as SATs, in the success of our students.

But it's both ineffective and potentially hazardous to allow states to be the watchdogs. Just as teachers cannot relinquish responsibility for school reform, communities must actively participate in school restructuring—or schools will never truly be accountable to their communities.

If states want to see improvements in student performance, they must provide revenue for site-based management and space for educators to effectively do our jobs.

Visionary educational leaders—and we exist in every community—can't be expected to work without support.

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BARRON'S JULY 12, 1993

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